

グリモワールXリバーズ

#01

～転生鬼神浪漫譚～

著: 藍藤遊 イラスト: エナミカツミ



カドカワBOOKS

written by YU-AIFUJI

illustrated by Katsumi Enami

Grimoire x Reverse

~Reincarnated Demon Romance Tale~

Arc 1 - Lone Wandering Demon

by Katsumi Enami

[Novel Updates](#)

Chapter 1: Habuil Tower ① [The Begining]

Suddenly, my memory became completely mixed up. I don't know how to correctly express the feeling at that time, something like that into words.

It's the worst. It's not at the level of feeling gross or painful, nor itchy. The unpleasantness running inside your body, dominated by the feeling of unexpressable nausea and headache like your brain is being roasted.

A while after that, I regained my consciousness to the flickering dazzling view as I finally noticed.

That this is the RPG game world I used to play in my previous life, that I am the mid-boss in the middle floor of the dungeon in the middle of the story, and that I'm in a more refreshingly delicate enough position.

"....Eh, why"

Having realized was good. Well, it may not be good but the most important point is something else. (In jap they say: 百歩譲って, which mean something abt priority so I just write it in my own words instead.)

However, isn't this situation somehow a little difficult.

Just why I, a peaceful life-living college student, am inside a mid-boss. Or should I say why now of all time that my previous life memories came back. In addition, why the consciousness of this dungeon's boss, that was supposed to be sealed, has returned.

I really can't figure it out.

The me now that have memory from two lifetimes together, is honestly confused enough to not know which is right or wrong.

One set of memory is my previous life. The memory from the me, who enjoyed college life, was up to when I got many random injuries from being minced by a train. Remembering even the pain when dying is not what I'm thankful for though. The pitiful guy who died from the train accident had alas

gathered more hate than sympathy.

What I'm sad about is that the irritation, from the fact that the train was delayed, was heavier than the sympathy for the lost of a person's life in the city.

Another set is of the me in this world. Though, in a strong class among the demon tribe, a dungeon boss whose consciousness had been deprived and became a doll with only power, is my memory. I do forgive that bastard dungeon boss.

Sorting things until here is not difficult, after all I have two set of memories as one of my previous life.

There is another problem.

Current state. Just why am I wearing clothes like it is from the Jomon period that just make me wants to perform a tsukkomi. (TL: jomon period <https://ja.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/縄文時代>).

Fur clothes. Beast fashion. Meat-eating youth.

I think nowadays, wearing only a piece of fur and swaggering under the sky, is just looking down on modern society but, as a matter of fact, this is not the modern society.

I'm not even a human.

A demon.

That's right, a demon. The mid-boss in the middle of this dungeon.... Habuil Tower. Certainly, having realized that I have no name is a terrible thing. To demons, this kind of feelings should have already been put away, though.

The way I see things is no different from humans but the most different are the two things growing on the corners of my head. Let's use Diab. (TL: it's read as Diab in Diablo). Don't dive into it.

Black and twisted two horns are growing on my head.

Let's organize the story. The me, who should have died from being hit by a train, was reincarnated alive in another world.

I'm able to grasp up to this point.

The next problem. This is the world of the famous RPG Grimoire Lancer II in my previous life.

Now then what to do. The me now will probably die from fighting the hero party when they appear in the game. I can only see such a fate.

However, I figured out then.

The me now has a choice to make before being done in as a mid-boss.

In my previous life memory, I remember some decent point of that RPG. As it was the game I like to play again and again in junior high school. I also knew about the cheat charts and the famous hidden dungeon.

There is also my strength.

I'm not going to be a mid-boss, isn't this the fastest way to escape from the hero party?

If I change my point of view, my memory came back one after another.

Noticing something, I look around my surrounding.

This Habuil tower is a dungeon.

Moreover, I am a mid-boss, isn't the reason I exist, is to protect somekind of treasure?

Though this is in a small room with no windows in the middle of the dungeon, there is fairly enough light to lit up the room. And turning my sight around the room.... there it was.

In the fairly dull room with exaggerated steel door at the deepest part of the room, in other words behind my back, there was a treasure box casually lying there.

It's the heros privilege to open treasure boxes?

As if there is something stupid like that.

Opening the treasure box in an excited mood, there was a giant axe inside.

"“Demon Slayer” huh. How nostalgic."

Me as a demon and using this Demon Slayer is how should I put it; right, it is

that feeling of something that doesn't really matter at the moment.

The axe was taller than me in length and the blade part is bigger than my body width.

If you wonder just why is an axe hidden behind my back, that is because there are profusely many demon race monsters in this Habuil tower.

After defeating me, the hero party will be able to break through this tower a little more easily.

Yoshi, Now that I got what I wanted, lets get out of here.

The key is not attached to the small room.

I put the axe on my back and vigorously opened the door.

The Habuil tower is a maze with complex passages with a few small rooms like the one I was in that form the structure of each floor.

I am not so confident in my memory but as long as I search thoroughly for the stairs down to the ground, I will probably be able to get out. In spite of being complex, in my memory this dungeon is fairly easy to map as there are no branching stairs.

As I was thinking positively when walking here and there on the iron path, I heard the sound of footsteps from the other side of the corner.

....eh. Is the hero party here already?

No, the sound is from only one person. When the hero came here, it was a three persons party. The possibility of independent action is not that high.

Being a little scared, I pulled out my axe.

Then, coming from the corner was a demon unlike me but a demon with a monster like atmosphere.

"...aah-. Thats right. Its like that, huh. Monster coming out. This is a dungeon afterall"

In my field of view is a completely red demon type monster that was letting out an intimidating growl.

I am a demon. With the appearance of a human with two horns growing on

my head, a race with only profusely high strength value and the enemy is just a “demon” monster.

There is no need to talk.

"Groowlllll!"

"Here goes!!"

I used brute force to swing the axe at the monster rushing towards me. Along with the feeling of cutting something, I can see the appearance of the demon being cut apart from the head in front of me.

"Guugaaa!!"

Flump— with dull striking sound of something falling on the iron floor, the demon monster fell down and disappeared.

"Fuu-....n?"

My body was giving off light. It flickered for a moment before disappearing immediately after.

That just now, was the effect right?

"Did I feel like I just leveled up?"

The question asked towards the mineral ceiling has, of course, never reached anyone and disappeared.

Chapter 2: Habuil Tower ② [Demon Tear]

From then on, I have been hunting some suitable demons. But there is something troubling. It is that the monsters fall in one shot if I use the Demon Slayer.

It has become nothing but a repeatitive game of head-on hit and kill.

I wonder if the heros from the RPG were always doing something like this in various dungeons. I am a little moved to tears. (TL: it said' his eyes is getting hot ' well figures.)

"Gugyyaaa!?"

Well, speaking of working diligently, I was wrapped around by light just then.

In other words, its the effect of the experience points entering my character, just like in the game.

If experience points exist, then so do level.

"Gigyaaa!?"

Anyway, I am expecting that my level will go up when I'd became a demon earnestly weilding the Demon Slayer.

Although, I am not particularly aiming for that, what an indescribable composition this is.

I wonder if there is some kind of body buried in this axe.

Saying it like this is probably a little better but– in fact, it could be said to be a very cruel thing.

"Gogyaaa!?"

"Can you only give those screams, huh you guys! !"

Weilding the Demon Slayer, and without moving from there, I earnestly cut down the monsters moving around on the passage.

Suddenly I thought of something.

This body is not so easily tired. I have confidence in my stamina as a demon

but after all this fighting and there is not even a little fatigue on my arm.

Is it probably the effect of the Demon Slayer?

Or maybe its the work of something else?

"Gegyaa! !"

"....! !"

Finally.

My body, in a moment, was wrapped around by blue and red contrast line of light spiralling around my body. Aka Barber effect. Its the unique effect from Grimoire x Lancer or was called so by the worlds gamers.

Anyhow, I am thankful that my level went up but the status window on the bottom isn't there.

Perhaps there is some special way to bring that out but after doing that stuff for a while, I don't have enough energy to try anything.

".....Oh-"

Suddenly, I noticed something lying on the floor where the monster disappeared. Its a drop.

What did it drop? I got a little of "Garde" the currency in this world until a while ago.

"Is it... demons tear?"

There isn't even some kind of indication.

A rare drop from the demon monsters. The original story is like those in fairy tales but the effect is the opposite.

It temporarily revokes all abnormal status and act as a bottom-up defense magic.

In other words, it covers all of the demons weakness. A doping item.

Or so it is but demons wasn't supposed to be able to use this in the game but for players, it can only be used for soothing oneself when fighting against opponents who uses magic.

Now that I got it, I don't even have a bag or anything, and there isn't even any

use for it. Then what should I do with it now?

Thinking up to there, I noticed something.

Thats right, this life's memory.

The reason I was in a place like this as a boss in a tower on the mountains is because of the magic that was sealing my consciousness.

Losing the pathetic personality of the former me, and ended up being made to protect a treasure in a place like this.

So why am I talking about it now? The answer is simple.

Like I said earlier demons have fairly high parameter for their physical system but in exchange they are awfully weak to special attacks.

.... then if I used this Demon tear—

Won't I be able to temporary fight with the entire parameter considerably strengthened?

And as if it had calculated the timing, another memory was revived back to me.

Come to think of the bosses here, the mid boss have a pretty weaker impression in the game than the me now.

"..... Brain Conference end."

I stand up after picking up the Demon Tear.

Fortunately, I haven't found the staircase yet.

This is what they call revelation while advancing to the top.

"Gigyaaa!?"

After killing the demon that suddenly appeared, I first decided to find the staircase up to the top.

To the tower boss, the Mad Wizard.

What floor is it, I wonder as I climbed. I remember that this Habuil tower has 9 floors but the floor where the mid boss is somewhere around the 5th floor so I think I'll be there soon.

Thinking that I climbed the stairs for the third time.
Feeling a little tired and when I was about to stop to rest a bit, a save point conveniently appeared before my eyes.

Surrounded by four pillars stretched an inhospitable ward for monsters that is for players to rest in.

Using tent items, it is an excellent place to make a full recovery of both HP and MP.

Thankfully if I also rest he-re

It repelled me.

Of course it does! ! I'm a demon after all ! !

Damnit! There isn't even a place for demons to rest our minds at all damnit!

Its multiple damage when its like being told at a place where you are completely tired" you are no longer human".

Having got no choice with the save room, I had to open the door to a small room outside the four pillars square zone.

Having seen it many times, the steel passage stretched onwards the floor.

"Gogegyaaa! ?"

I'm so tired of being your opponent.....

If there is one thing I discovered, then it's the save point.

This means that it is close to the tower boss, also means its close to the top!

The me who is already motivated to beat the boss, I am sure this has to be done by brute force alone.

"Hmm" (TL: its 'fumu' here)

The save point is here which means the boss is definitely up there.

Indeed I don't have to remember the whole structure of the dungeon. I can go blindly, then the save point will tell me which floor I'm on.

Then when I got on the steel passage, I noticed a pale light leaking from somewhere.

.....eh

There wasn't supposed to be any special event on this floor.

Attracted by the strange light, I moved towards it.

The dungeon still stinks of iron but I wonder what's there.

The source is just on the corner of the passage I was walking on.

Now then what is going to come out? Is it a demon or a snake?

"Gogyaa! ?"

It's a demon.

With the axe, I cut the demon that appeared at the moment I'd want it to. Got my expectations up for nothing. A little frustrated as I put the axe back to my back, the light yet again got my eyes.

"...Is this it?"

Hidden under the defeated demon was what looked like a stone that was left behind after the demon disappeared.

The heck is this?

What I picked up was just a small debris-like stone at the size of a ping pong ball.

Even when touching, it doesn't give out any spooky feel at all.

Were there any items like this?

Standing up while tilting my head, the debris-like stone shined and floated in my hand.

"..... what is this?"

A small round stone giving off a pale blue light while rotating in the air. When it slowly floated up to the point of my eyes....it disappeared into my chest as if being sucked in.

"ha?.....eh-woah! !"

Eh-what's this?

Before I can even ask that question, my body started getting boiling hot and full of power. Like an enhancer, a vitality agent. Surprisingly, I even know that

my power is going wild.

Its not like the power up when leveling up but I couldn't catch up to what it is. A power type status up item that didn't exist in Grimoire Lancer.

Even with the cursed ones, there is no such armor item in my memory.

Then just what is this strange debris like item?

Lets stop thinking. I should be grateful receiving something that makes me stronger.

Thinking by my self isn't going to work. Sometimes it might be best not to think too much.

Moreover, just at the tip of the place where the stone was at, was a staircase.

I hope its the last but I wonder—

Step, step, walking up the iron stairs.

Looking in front, I can see an intimidating door. Rather than iron it has the feeling of being made of bronze, and I can somehow feel pressure from there.

"Now then. Let the game begin."

I don't know how I should use the Demon Tear but for now lets try to risk it.

Then at the same time as it started, brilliant twinkling silver sand fell on my body.

And at the same time a red aura surrounds me.

Seems like the way I use it is correct.

Well, now the only choice I have is to try and wage a fight.

I started running up the stairs. My energy has increased dramatically since a while ago.

Its probably the effect of that debris like stone.

Opening the door with a burst, what I see inside was a magician, a suspicious man, standing behind many aligned pots.

It's him.

Its definitely the culprit who sealed "me", the boss of this tower.

The Mad Wizard, Garies.

Chapter 3: Habuil Tower ③ [VS the Mad Wizard]

Today, at the top of the tower, the wizard Gaius has been busy making magic pills. Without a window, he immersed himself in research with only the dim crystal lights. Not thinking about profit or the interests of others, he perpetually immersed himself in magic study. Seizing whatever he wanted, and eliminating any disturbances.

Recently, he had made a keeper.

Since he had obtained the Demon Slayer, a weapon which greatly damages demons, he had to guard his tower to keep it from falling into someone else's hands. Trapping a strong demon from the nearby mountain, he crushed its will and brought it here.

Thanks to this, his tower's security was perfect.

Although. "Haa." (Gaius)

Recently he was melancholic.

For researchers such as Gaius, a sanctuary or sponsor is necessary. Otherwise, bounty hunters who have caught on his crimes would come for him. So, protected under the umbrella of a mighty organism...one of the Four Heavenly Demon Lords, he built up his own refuge. Though he could only flatter them, the Chimera monsters Gaius made were pretty useful so at least he received some hospitality. It was only now, in such an environment, he could freely immerse himself in his research.

However.

"I will leave you with a key to the door of the Makai Underground Empire. Once you are defeated by someone and lose it, you will die."

His superiors, the Four Heavenly Lords, pressed that key on to him, leaving him dejected.

Makai Underground Empire. Its existence was known, and also that Gaius had

the key.

To his credit, they had confidence in his chimeras and demon subordinates. They are powerful chimera that possibly incorporate the Devil Gene, which are, without a doubt, enough to overwhelm any adversary's forces.

But the problem with the key is that the existence "Crane Fafnir" (TL: *It has been suggested that this person is most likely the protagonist from the game Grimoire Lancer, which I think is very plausible*) will no doubt come here to attack.

In one country from the Three Kingdoms Federation, a Kamiko of light is selected by a professor as part of this existence. They will probably try to overthrow the devil, and so he thought it obvious that they will advance on the underground empire, needing to attack him for the key he possessed.

"...Haa." (Gaius)

Gaius himself is no good with conflict. Though combat, using demonic drugs, is finally possible. Even so, there is still the melancholy and the accompanying fear of not knowing when an attack will occur.

It was not insecurity in his defenses with chimeras and the demon, but that his opponent is the Kamiko of light. (TL: *this is a mix of two words, "Kami" or god, and either "miko" a shrine maiden, or just "ko" as in child. In other words, the Kamiko is a person blessed by god*) Definitely, it is difficult to imagine that his tower would be devastated within his own territory.

"What is needed is...maiden's tongue, then the Dragon jewel...? Now if the greed sensor will even activate..." (Gaius)

The maiden's tongue multiplies the chimera's attack, and should be somewhere in the village. The Dragon jewel...I think I could ask the Four Heavenly Lords. That definitely won't be easy.

While inspecting the documents, he compared what he needed next. Although he should have been happy to be able to directly research, you might wonder why in the corner of his mind he had a feeling composed of lead. Naturally, because he thought that the Kamiko of light would probably attack.

Then, at that time.

The bronze door cracked and literally flew inward. Rather than thinking to check the reflection, he turned his neck to face the entrance. How terrible was the Kamiko of light or Crane Fafnir, to repel the bronze door in an instant.

“It appeared!?” (Gaius)

Just in case, he had prepared a trap switch. So when an enemy appeared it would come in handy. When you pressed the switch, twelve cultured chimeras would spring out of their aligned pods in the laboratory.

“To intrude on my laboratory, allow my best weapon to come out... Kamiko...?” (Gaius)

Wrong.

It is not Crane Fafnir.

What is that?

“Gegiyagiya!?”

Some kind of weapon was swung quickly with an almost invisible trajectory, and in a moment a chimera was divided in two, a creature that supposedly had enough power to easily destroy a village.

On the contrary, one strike after another kept cracking the steel floor.

These strongest species of chimera were overpowered in a flash. Although he had incorporated many kind of demons in large quantities, why was it so easily cut? Even though the devil gene was incorporated!

“Gegiyagiya!!”

“Yeah! Now or Never!...Hiu!?” (Demon)

Without a doubt, it was not Kamiko, a being of light. With sharp eyes of gold, its body was clad in a dreadful aura of two colors, black and red.

Gaius notices, and shaking his fist he cries out harshly.

“I can’t believe it...the demon...!? Why!? Why did it betray me?!” (Gaius)

No, it is different now.

His instinct and soul yelled that it was different. The demon was placed in the

middle of the tower, so moving up here with such speed is impossible. No matter how strong of a demon tribe, none could cut a chimera in two.

And he should have been unarmed. Yet, he wielded the weapon with godly speed. Wh-what is that strength? The attacking chimeras were each killed in a single blow. Changing from one target to the next like a black panther, the demon wielded its weapon and steadily came towards him.

“Oh...Oohh...!” (Gaius)

Within several seconds all of the chimera were defeated.

But why? Why is such a thing?

The pills in the palm of his hand shook, this medicine causes one to undergo a physical transformation. But there is no time to lose. Otherwise he would be killed!

At once he chewed the tablets in his mouth. Power boils. As of now, with this much his fist could smash a holding pod in one hit. Demon conversion. These were enhancement drugs that gave one the power of a demon.

“Hey...!” (Demon)

“Wha-what is this!!” (Gaius)

While rotating its victims round and round with one hand, the demon murmured and its red aura rose.

“Tell me...” (Demon)

“Wha-what hya!?” (Gaius)

With intimidating eyes of gold, already heavier and sharper than one of the Four Heavenly Demon Lords, it split and shredded the air pressure, causing Gaius’ teeth to make chattering sounds.

“My name is...!” (Demon)

“Hya...! I, I do not know!” (Gaius)

Instantaneously, the demon crouched, and rushed at Gaius at a speed likely to leave an afterimage. It wore a red aura like lightning bolts.

No, he could not afford to lose. Here was a demon that raised all parameters.

Analyze the trajectory of that weapon. And kill him, with his fist.

But the demon before his eyes was better than expected. Imperceptibly, its eyes gleamed before him. In horror he finally noticed the weapon it wielded.

“Eh, the Demon Slayer!?” (Gaius)

In the moment he was slashed by the great axe, Gaius learned his own defeat.

“...My name...you really don't know?” (Demon)

In the end, he felt like he had heard such a voice.

Chapter 4: Sanctuary of the Goddess [Pearl Pieces. Fragments of Mana]

Since my pace was pretty slow, once I got out of the tower it was pitch dark.

But well, thinking about the previous fight, it was too easy and I couldn't honestly call it one. According to my memory the middle boss is certainly stronger than the boss of the tower, but I didn't think there was enough of a difference that he could be defeated in one blow. Demon tears shouldn't be useful to improve attack power, but it should increase level by one or two.

Still, did I become like this because of that fragmented debris-like stone from that time?

"Well, I'm grateful to have become strong but it is troubling that this item doesn't exist in Grimoire Lancer."

Grimoire Lancer is a trilogy of I, II, and III, but it is all based in the same world...that I remember. True to its name, the protagonist is a librarian wielding a magic spear. Since the Kamiko of light protagonist in the hero party certainly died in the first game, the newly selected Kamiko of light in II by the Scholar country became the second protagonist.

A guy who was a close friend of the sequel's protagonist was to become the third hero, as the series continued to develop and expand. For game III, the scale continued to increase from II over time.

So, according to 'my' memory, it is plain that this is the world of Grimoire Lancer II and I am the middle boss. Most of the elements I've viewed of this world match. But what if, the world possibly shifted a little...Or perhaps this world came first, and the development team received strange radio waves, resulting in the making of Grimoire Lancer? How suspicious.

Well, whatever. "Does such a thing even matter?"

In any case, it's important to survive first.

"...What to do."

Now, the item dropped by the tower boss was in my hand. Fixed drop from Gaius “key of the underground empire (orange).” For the hero to proceed with the story, it is essential to collect the seven colored keys in order to enter the underground empire for the first time. It is the so-called “rare item.” It cannot be sold or discarded. (TL: *rare item is literally translated as “important thing(s)” but looking it up a bit I was able to get its game term translation*) “Even if I headed towards the hero, is that one of my choices?”

Stowing the key away in a fashionable pocket, I suddenly look up at the sky. (TL: *English ‘fasshon,’ otherwise I’d go for something else*) A view rarely seen in the city, the whole night sky was filled with stars.

“Oou...” Unintentionally, I leaked a sigh of admiration at the splendid clean night sky. I think among them as one who is lost.

“I, what is my name...” So, only my own name, I could not remember at all.

It was not a good feeling to be called demon, demon, but more than that I felt the gaping loneliness, as if my chest was vacant after twenty years of life had just disappeared. I finally admitted that I had died, and abandoned my attachment to my previous life. Of course, there is the desire to insert an apology to my father and mother and friends who are not here. But, the damage to what has been lost is too great.

“No, This isn’t like me.” I may not be able to recover my name, so it is useless to go on with such thoughts.

“For the time being I can’t go to any kind of village, I’ll have to find somewhere else to sleep.”

I had become stronger thanks to the fragment, so I probably wouldn’t die as long as I wasn’t attacked. Though I am strong now and won’t die so easily, that Japanese jerk killed me like socks packed with Styrofoam. (TL: *something about packing Styrofoam in socks. I tried. T-T*) Around the tower, a dim, eerie forest completely surrounds the whole area. Perhaps because I am a demon, I do not feel fearful. Finding a suitable tree, I jump. The ability of this body easily landed on the thick branches, though perhaps it was just the variety of demon I am. Anyway, my first problem should be the demon tear.

“Will the demon tears...cause problems afterwards?”

The purpose of the Demon Tears was to correct magical defense and repel all magic that causes an abnormal state, making it a lethal weapon for demons. However, it is a rare monster drop from demons and can only be used a certain number of times, so it cannot be casually used as a disposable. It wouldn't be funny to come face to face with another demon and be annihilated because of this condition. And, considering the time of effect has worn off immediately upon defeating the tower boss, it seems the condition in this world for "single use for combat" has not changed. As such, hunting 200 or more in just one day is stupid.

Wait, no, rather than the demon tears, my first priority should be my parameters.

The Demon race is inherently weak in magical defense. Awfully weak. So, I need something else to overcome this weakness. This must be taken care of first, by all means. While living, I don't want to be bossed around like the demon "me" before whose consciousness was crushed by magic. That's why I want something to guard against magic.

Leaning against the tree trunk, I used the branch as substitute for a bed. "Alright, all set."

Sleeping like the people of the forest, looking outward from being in a high place is not bad. That reminds me, since the Habuil tower is here, that probably means this is the far East island of Jappon, right? (TL: *He calls this place ジャポネ instead of 'Nippon/Nihon,' so to differentiate the name of the game's country from our world's 'Japan' I chose 'Jappon' so there wouldn't be confusion of place. This won't change unless a clearer connection comes later*) I remembered the geography of this world. ...I wonder suddenly about magical items, like some kind of bracelet. Lying around somewhere near here was a convenient item.

Hmmm...

—

Suddenly before my eyes there was a woman with soft white hair tinged in brown who was angry to the bone. I don't understand why.

"So, who're you?" (MC)

“I was once a goddess!!” (Goddess)

Where did we go? What is this space? It is an unfamiliar place of white. It does not seem to be distorted space-time used in order increase training. It seems to be a sanctuary that could be anywhere.

“I’ve told you this is my sanctuary!!” (Goddess)

“Is that so? So, then who are you?” (MC)

“I’m supposed to be a goddess!! I’ve said so many times!!” (Goddess) The goddess who stamped the ground looked familiar. Like the goddess from Grimoire Lancer III.

...Oh, it was this goddess.

“It’s become difficult here because of you!” (Goddess)

“I’m troubled that you say so.” (MC)

It seems the reason why my soul has come to the world of Grimoire Lancer is because of this former goddess I have met in this sanctuary. I want to ask why my soul was brought flying here.

“The Supreme God from your world sent you the corner of this world!? Do you not remember!?” (Goddess) So she says...but such a thing doesn’t seem to have happened. Though, ‘How interesting, a talented individual! Alright I’ll send you to my world!’...profusely said by a handsome god may have occurred.

“You have remembered clearly!!” (Goddess)

“Huh, I think that was a dream.”

“This is also me talking to you in your dream! It is a privilege of the gods! That is what I am already doing!” (Goddess) How troubling, now that you mention it. Which is why I ‘m unable to do it.

“Because of you, my mana pump ruptured and pieces scattered all over the land!” (Goddess) “soku...What did you say?” (TL: *He’s trying to say sokuto. ‘pump’ was in Engrish, and sokuto won’t MTL, though I assume it means something similar*) “So-ku-to! A pump, pump!” (Goddess)

“Don’t use such difficult words. It looks stupid.” (MC)

“Don’t say that!? Anyway! Because your soul was brought here the mana pump burst!

Therefore the mysterious pearl piece was incorporated into a body which is harmful to mortals!” (Goddess) ...Incorporated into the body? Oh, she means the debris-like stone fragment?

“You mean the thing that I found and already took in?” (MC)

Making a small circle about the size of a ping-pong ball with her fingers, the goddess began to shake her head vertically. What is this V system? (TL: *my best guess is a signaling system, like the peace sign being V for victory, though I’m not exactly sure what she’s doing either. My impression is like when someone catholic crosses themselves*) “That’s not it!! How much are you going to tease me until you are satisfied!? I mean seriously!?” You found one already!?” Brushing aside her bangs, the goddess looked upwards. I don’t know if there is a heaven, but she seemed amazed. “Ah, seriously...! I’m amazed!! Is this a good thing!? When other living things take it in, the power absorbed drives it mad or kills it! Somehow you collected it without dying, so don’t run away and create a disaster! This is your fault!” (Goddess) “Well, I’m not devoting my soul to god.” (MC)

“Ah, you can’t oppose the god Tom!” (Goddess)

“Oh, right, the name of the god was Tom.” (MC) *Pon* I’m convinced. This is a sign I guess. I remember that is what the people named this popular god.

“By the way, what happens to others who incorporate fragments, excluding me?” (MC) “It depends on the tolerance of the biological organism, but... a strong monster will become outrageously powerful.” (Goddess) “Hooh.” (MC)

“I’m not kidding, in this case with your strength where the medium boss can be taken out in one shot, you have reached a point where you can fight with the Four Heavenly Demon Lords.” (Goddess) “So, I have become strong to the extent I can fight the final dungeon of the underground empire?” (MC) “You can see why the scattered fragments are bad then, no?” (Goddess) I see -. By the way...the ruptured pump...is it alright?

“I can fix it, but the problem is spreading across the land by the minute. It’s getting dangerous so please gather them quickly.” (Goddess) “How many?”

(MC)

“Please remember that including the one you found there are 15 mana fragments littered across the land. Now that you understand, gather them quickly!” (Goddess) “I still don’t understand how my body took in the fragment.” (MC)

“You are currently a spirit body! The tower in woods near where you are sleeping is equipped with a radar!! Idiot bald-y!” (Goddess) “Hey, I’m not bald!” I said so to the Goddess. Ignoring the teeth and big horns, my black hair has grown bushy.

“Anyway! It is important to gather them quickly. Since you are a strong person, it’s good, but troublesome things will probably happen to make things difficult. When that happens you can use the ‘Warrior State.’ Try to avoid being reckless and wasteful with the stray fragments.” (Goddess) “Stray fragments, which stray fragments?” (MC) (TL: *probably for when he collects more later*) “So noisy! Just collect them!” (Goddess)

Although it’s not too bad, being a slave is rough– to do this for such a goddess– “Urgh...I’ll collect them if you give me something good.” (MC)

“There seems to be a magic item or something somewhere around here that creates a stronger magical relationship? And don’t tell me to just make one.” (Goddess) “Can’t you make one?” (MC)

“Yeah, impossible. It’s troublesome, but the at this point in time the first sanctuary cannot interfere even a little in the lower bound. However, this is the reason why you were called from outside.” (Goddess) “Goddess yoe-(女神よえー)” (MC)

“I’m sick of you! North of the island there is a hidden dungeon. Look for the [Master of Kinagaishi (着流し)] hidden in the basement.” (Goddess) “Oh, there was such a thing.” (MC)

Being a master (TL: *or guru, if you prefer*), the expectation is for an item with a Japanese atmosphere, a kimono of navy blue. The effect of the simple armor is to increase the power of magical defense...making it perfect for me.

“Oh, that reminds me, how many fragments should I be able to capture and

absorb?" (MC) "Well, if there is no upper limit then I want you to absorb all 15."
(Goddess) "And what is the Warrior State?" (MC)

The statue of a goddess seems to say that it is troublesome.

"...Please, for the time being just collect, because it is not going so well.
Because some of the fragments are in the hidden dungeon." (Goddess) Wait,
this person! Reading a person's mind is the lowest of the low!

"So you finally noticed. Well, good luck." (Goddess)

The Big-sister-type goddess waved as she gradually blurred and dissipated.
But the 'Warrior State?' I will do my best and try not to be hateful.

"Oh, by the way." (Goddess)

N, cho, it's probably already gone. Just disappear already.

"Best regards during your absorption of the second or more, because your
recovery of memory will happen as painfully as possible." (Goddess) !?...!?

Though I looked back again, for the second time my sight went pitch black.

Chapter 5: Negri Mountain Abandoned Mine

① [Master Kinagaishi]

With my whole body draped in animal skins and with my black hair, two twisting horns, and sharp golden eyes without any motivation, I do not look the least bit trustworthy.

Kodama? (*Ancient Tree Spirit*) No, it's me.

"Has that goddess hidden something from me until the very end? If she waits until the last moment to reveal she is actually a perverted man, then D*mn her behavior." (MC)

I am a demon.

Distinguishing between the monsters there are those with intelligence and/or form closer to human beings called demons. Speaking of which, the atmosphere of this world's setting include multiple categories of monsters and demons without intelligence. The demonic races who are most likely to speak the language are those who can interact with humans.

Then there is the monster weapon Demon Slayer.

Worst of all, there is the incorporation of the mysterious pearl pieces.

However, even though I do not know if it is the effect of the pearl pieces, it is refreshing to kill a monster in one blow. Although I am unaware of how much stronger I've become, would it not be fine to see what I can do? Was that what the goddess was saying? I'll lose when I believe the words from such a person. Surely. Among other things, if the 15 pieces turns out to be a lie...I wish it were a lie. If it turns out the story is true and I have to fight the boss of the army of demon soldiers, I might die even if I fight seriously.

"...Pearl pieces, I get the feeling I'd better quickly get a hold of them!" (MC)

The next day was sunny.

The lovely sunlight also rubbed against the dreadful weeping form of the trees. As such, the spooky forest intimidation was reduced to less than a

quarter. That is why there was no issue in heading to the north dungeon while passing through the forest where the tower was.

...Even so.

For the tower to consciously face a dungeon is random.

Though didn't the goddess say there was a fragment sensor?

Well, it's a good thing.

The problem is if I'm gonna be strong, then don't I need to absorb the fragments, which hurts a lot? It really hurts? That said, I wouldn't have to pretend and can no longer be referred to as defective but can relax. I would think it be taken in from my hand, but it's a little scary because last time it leaped into my chest with no questions asked. I mean, I wouldn't care if a young woman leaps to my chest, but perhaps the fragments use an examination system, though I don't know if the Laser-Wing is triggered, (TL: *what he's talking about is basically a very accurate laser tracking system used in aerospace technologies, and it's in English*) and apparently if there is room of some kind or another then it is likely to slip through the hands.

"Careful, I'll have to pay attention." (MC)

Currently, after passing through the forest toward the northern dungeon, it became necessary to climb a low mountain. In the meantime, there seems to be no decent road. I wish I could use teleportation magic, but sadly my aptitude for magic as a demon is close to none. As such, I have been running towards the dungeon at full power. I have become the wind!! With my arms spread wide to feel the wind, I proceed while leaping among the trees.

"Mama, what is that-?"

"I know, don't look." (TL: *bahaha, this took me a second. I doubt he's near a town, but he seems to be imagining how it would be an embarrassing situation if a child and mother saw him like this, especially since he's wearing very rough clothing and leaping over things.* 😊)

Speaking of the northern dungeon, it is a former site of an old mine. As for why it is hidden, unless a certain condition is met it is impossible to enter this dungeon. This place was originally a mine, but unknown even to the local

people it became an underground dungeon. Located on the lowest layer there is the cash item “Treasure of Tokugawa.” Listening to the playful amounts of rumors on this item, unless a certain event occurs, you cannot enter.

Originally, there was no need to visit this dungeon, but occasionally a unique and legendary monster will pop up, and this strong demonic being is the expert, the Master of Kinagaishi, causing cash items to be placed in lowest layers for visitors.

“Well...here?” (MC)

There was a manmade opening cut into a corner of the mountain. A railroad track indicating a line for a trolley stretched into the ruins, indicating it had been used repeatedly. Standing in front of the coal mine, I look inside and see only an extensive darkness. A torch will probably be desirable.

“...Well, this body’s sharp night vision should somehow be effective.”

At the time I didn’t know. There is no relationship between the darkness of the cave and night vision.

“Kura-!! It’s pitch dark!! Idiot! I’m an idiot!!” (MC)

Later, I was standing again in front of the mines. With a torch.

“There’re multiple paths!? How is my makeshift torch supposed to see around the corners of the tunnel from where I am?!” (MC)

The fact that I was slightly broken by this is a secret. So let’s start exploring. This dungeon has thirteen floors to the bottom. Because the Master of Kinagaishi is around the ninth floor or so, in the meantime I will be descending.

“Yeah, but, this cave also has an atmosphere.” (MC)

Occasionally, trees made into posts to artificially support the mine enter my sight. Otherwise the atmosphere coming through of excavated earth remains intact. There is no uniformity in height or width of the steps either. That’s why to a certain degree, there is the thrilling feeling of going on an adventure.

“I want to believe it’s me going down the stairs with the *Tsutshi Tsutchi* sound effects and not just some other guy.” (MC)

Even without including the Grimoire Lancer series I was a gamer who played

RPG games extensively. As such, I couldn't help but get dizzy from the adventurous atmosphere. For me, there's also the thrill in finding B ranked treasure chests.

Now, where is the Master Kinagaishi?

As I went down the stairs, I counted carefully.

This is because once I have been down seven flights of stairs I should soon search with more effort. This dungeon is large, though considering the height of my physical prowess, rummaging through a single floor has been no effort at all. If only there was one like that.

"That reminds me, I still have not seen the unique monster" (MC)

Unique monster. These famous and rare monsters and demons will occasionally appear in dungeons. Even though the probability is quite low, there is also a legendary class monster that could come out, but even if I don't want to believe an "encounter = GAME OVER" because of the devilish specifications for strength. Although in the game it seems the intentionally hidden dungeon is playful, in reality I hope for a pardon.

On the other hand, I am supposed to meet unique monsters more frequently once I am put in a dungeon. Or, if that's too troublesome, it would be better if it's just some kind of strange beast.

Progressing with my left hand on the walls of soil, in front of my eyes appeared a treasure chest. There are no trapped treasure chests in Grimoire Lancer II. There is the fear that this world might have them, but curiosity won over. Opening it with a *Pakari* there are navy blue clothes sitting there.

Success. Laying out the clothes, they are definitely Kinagaishi. The squid knot waistband calls victory to me.

"Alright! I can finally say good bye to this fur pelt!" (MC)

Stripping off the fur, I put my arms through the sleeves carefully. Cool. Well, for a demon dressed in a kimono, it's rather tasteful.

Oh!

It sounded like something fell. In terms of timing, it's probably from the

Kinagaishi. Taking another peek inside the treasure chest, there was something else.

There was a stone with extremely dull and dark colors. And what's with this mysterious pearl piece? From the color it doesn't seem to be cursed. But, I feel like my instinct is complaining about it anyhow. Previously when I picked one up it activated no questions asked.

"...I mean, why is it completely this color?" (MC)

Even when the torch is brought closer, the color does not change. What even on Earth.

"Anyway, for the time being my purpose is finished? This stone doesn't seem to be activating?" (MC)

I don't really get it, so I'll just leave.

I turn back around, out of this position. It was not that I didn't have any interest in the Treasure of Tokugawa, but being a demon it doesn't make much sense for me to be carrying around money. Also, it would be better to use a longer lasting torch made by an actual craftsman.

Since that's the case, it should be enough to just appropriately deal with any monster that pops up. With such a thought, I went back the original way I came.

"Help! Help me!!!" (Girl)

"You monster can't escape me!"

"Oh?" (MC)

Somehow, a little girl with black hair was fleeing from two men.

...wait, that little girl is flying? Those are black wings growing out of her back, right? That form, I think I've seen it somewhere, but what was it? There is the possibility that little girl is a unique monster. Unlike a monster in the broad sense of the word, in this case she is a unique monster who is also a demon but...by this time the monster was captured.

"I can't wait! This Kozuka can be purchased at a high price!"

"Before that I want to give it a go, Gufufufufu!"

To use the word Kozuka...Aah, she is most likely a vampire, perhaps even a 'Vampire Lady.' (TL: *according to research, a kozuka is a decorative handle fitted for a utility knife, but it could also translate to 'Dilettante' which means amateur. Not sure why this is here unless as either an insult or innuendo*)

The little girl fled desperately.

Oh, tears fell from the beautiful ruby-like eyes of the little girl...

Un~

I guess it is good to help a little girl, since she is also a demon. My conscience ached a bit at the consideration of letting her be caught by such a brute.

Vampire Hunter Kernel has appeared!

Vampire Hunter Bruce has appeared! ▼

Chapter 6: Negri Mountain Abandoned Mine

② [Vampire Hunters]

Vampire Lady:

The vampire girl Flare Reel was in complete confusion and fear as if someone who was living in their homeland was suddenly flown to this foreign dungeon.

As for why she was in this dark dungeon, it was probably due to the fact that this dungeon incorporates unique monsters by summoning them from various random locations. These summons were not originally included in the dungeon, and the purpose for its existence is to be certain that at least one of the unique monsters is thrown in. In the dungeon was implanted a special code that the unique monster was to be as follows: "Vampire." Thus she was called without any understanding, and had the hardship of being hunted in this dungeon on her left and right. Although the monsters are not collected from the demonic races, it cannot be helped because it is a dungeon that is artificially made by human hands.

Besides not knowing why she was called to another dungeon, there was a second reason the vampire girl was fearful. That is, two men are chasing her. Vampire Hunters.

"H...Help me ee...!!" (Flare Reel)

She is one of the demon's top races. A vampire. But, she is much too young. So, even though a vampire has superhuman strength, she was flustered. This was convenient for the Vampire Hunters, but a nightmare for her.

Until a while ago, she was living with her vampire parents in peace, surrounded by woods in a beautiful location facing the lake. Each day was spent without any inconvenience. Nevertheless, she had found herself in darkness among the smell of soil. She had been hunted and cornered by armed men with bloodshot eyes. Though she had called her mother and father's names many times, they had not appeared to meet her.

‘A bad dream, this must be a dream.’ Though she thought this, the pain she felt when she fell is definitely reality. Since she was young, she still didn’t understand.

“a’right!!” (Hunter Bruce)

“Hiu~!?” (Flare Reel)

Something like an anchor had pierced her ankle. She cried out, not wanting to believe the blood splattering everywhere was hers.

“AAAAaAh!!” (Flare Reel)

In an instant, red filled her mind from the harsh pain. The impact gave the illusion of falling into lava, and she fearfully collapsed on the rugged ground.

But, she is a vampire.

From an early age she has been powerful, and will not die so easily. With a sound like burning flesh, her wounds are healed. It is a defensive response trait originating from her tribe. The Vampire Hunters who know this continue to attack.

“No, N...N-No!!” (Flare Reel)

The long straight black hair that had always been praised by her parents had already lost its sheen. Time and time again she tumbled after being hit and fell on the now muddy ground, before trying to get up and run away again. Her powerless wings flapped desperately but could only fly at a human’s running speed. She was a mess and did not even know where she was going anymore. She shouted for help, but her words would not reach anyone’s ears.

“Enough, will ya just give up!!” (Hunter Bruce) “Uahaaahaaa!!” (Hunter Kernel)

One of the men seemed to be a magician. He was releasing fist-sized icicle arrows at her. Without understanding how to withdraw and avoid them, Flare Reel felt severe pain as the ice stuck to her hands and feet and made her tumble.

“This %#&% brat.” (Hunter Bruce)

“A vampire wholly determined to escape is troublesome.” (Hunter Kernel)
Though she had chosen to flee from fear, her face had turned bright red from

her tears as she suffered the pain from her wounds. Though the arrows of ice melted quickly, it filled the wounds so she could only endure the pain while moving.

“Aim at the wings!” (Hunter Kernel)

The man pointed his blade at her supple bat wings. She is desperately moving, her legs trying to run away from the site.

“Papa...help me!!” (Flare Reel)

Of course her crying would never reach him. On the contrary, her voice was increasingly making her throat hoarser. Flare Reel was desperate. For a long time she had been running headed towards wherever she thought would be good, thinking of what was at stake. Though she would rather be rescued, as the situation began to crush and wear down her spirit.

After all, she was no younger than 10. Although a vampire, she is not at the age that can live without the protection of parents. And being young, she does not know to curse her sudden harsh fate.

“It’s weakened, so don’t get sloppy in the capture okay?” (Hunter) “It’s about time, don’t you think?” (Hunter) The men’s conversation touched her ears. Capture.

“N...o...!” (Flare Reel)

“Ice Lance!” (Hunter Kernel)

The Ice Lance is long and sharp. Like a giant needle it flew through the cave of earth faster than the vampire girl. Then a dull sound, like something tearing.

“Ah...ka...!?” (Flare Reel)

“Alright, nice!” (Hunter)

The spear of ice brilliantly pierced a single wing as it stabbed through her arm. Even heavier than before, Flare Reel’s body crashed to the ground. Although she was still ahead of those two madmen, the unimaginable happened and a decent future did not appear. Of course because it is not decent to be passive. Still desperate, in an attempt to stand up to get away she noticed.

“Ah.” (Flare Reel)

In front, there was no path. It was a dead end.

“Whew! It stopped in a great position, no?” (Hunter Kernel) “It’s still a brat, but demand still exists for her. Gufufufu.” (Hunter Bruce) The two men joke as they approach slowly through the darkness to capture her. One of the vampire hunters took out a chain. The magic felt familiar. It was probably something that would seal the consciousness of the captured person.

“No...!!” (Flare Reel)

Since she still remained stuck by the ice in her wing, she dripped blood every time she twisted her body. The pain was tremendous, but more than that her senses were dominated by her fear.

‘I don’t want this – Help!

The floating images of her family’s faces began to disappear one after another. Don’t – Anyone, please help me. Why has this happened? Why, why?’

“Well, let’s do it.” (Hunter Kernel)

The chain swung in a mad dance as if it were alive, and jumped to its target, Flare Reel. Once she was caught in that thing, escape would be impossible.

Her trembling legs wouldn’t work, nor could her wings move at all. Frozen in a spell of fear, Flare Reel cried out.

“Nooooooooo!” (Flare Reel)

The chain was cast.

The Vampire Hunter’s thoughts:

So far it had been a struggle. Dabbling in terrible crimes and gaining money through illegal work. However, even though this vampire was young, they could finally lead a decent life. Return their debt. Also being daily overworked by the Demon King’s army will end.

So.

So,

So why did this pop in!?! Legendary Monster!!

In a gust of wind it had appeared between the vampire and the hunters, a

monster clad in an abnormal pressure...a demon. Fueled by the fluttering blue Kinagaishi. Two twisted sharp horns. Casually long black hair. Its aura was heavier than any demon the vampire hunters had ever come across until now, and was painful to bear.

“That...!!”

In a single blow from the huge axe carried on its back, it destroyed the Demon Breaker (TL: *or “Exorcism”*) chain.

Although it was greater than the sense of anger at it being inactive, a general impatience came over his body, wanting to run away quickly as there would only be one chance to act.

“O, oi...What now?” (Hunter Bruce)

“Sh-should we escape?” (Hunter Kernel)

The Vampire Hunters glanced at each other and made eye-contact. In the meantime, the legendary monster in front of him stood quietly in place.

“...Who?” (Flare Reel)

Potsuri (sfx for a drip of water, which then rings out) The voice that leaked out was young and hoarse. The sound resounded in the cave of soil, but the demon showed no reaction.

It stood between them, and the hunter quivered. ‘No way,’ he thought. ‘This demon couldn’t be a legendary monster, as it wouldn’t cover this young vampire.’

The demon moved. Shouldering the huge axe like it was completely normal. However, with every move it only became increasingly intimidating. Dread, continually fueled by fear.

“...Who? I wonder.” (Demon)

“Huh...?” (Hunter)

It spoke; ‘Who? I wonder.’

The Vampire Hunter thought it over. ‘What is it? Isn’t it a demon? A demon of the Oni tribe. That much is obvious. Even though it looks like an Oni, what

would ask such a question?’

“No way...” (Hunter Kernel)

More than the spoken words, the demon’s golden eyes pierced into the Vampire Hunter.

“...tsu! Ooooooh, Give us back our money!” (Hunter Bruce) “Fool, don’t!!” (Hunter Kernel)

No longer able to withstand the fear, his partner rushed forward, brandishing his saber. Thinking about it, he did not have to. His partner pounced on the demon with the saber in one hand, as the broad axe was slowly slammed into the ground.

In a climactic instant the soil swelled from the crack like a surging tsunami.

“Wow!?”

The ground raised angry waves in a straight line.

His partner was easily killed, and the other Vampire Hunter barely survived, avoiding it at the last minute on the path. ‘What was that!? It merely swung the axe gently. Is this a legendary monster? I don’t believe it, but I wonder...’

“Legendary Demon...Oni Shuten...!?” (Hunter Kernel) “What?” (Demon)

The suspicious looking demon glared at the Vampire Hunter.

“...!!” (Hunter Kernel)

‘He had sometimes heard of it. Sealed hundreds of years ago, that legend of a demon, the strongest Oni. No way, it was alive?’

“Tsu!!”

I can’t do this. I won’t survive before such a guy.’

“R-run away!!” (Hunter Kernel)

The Vampire Hunter abruptly turned around and tried to flee, but it never occurred to him it would not pursue.

Chapter 7: Negri Mountain Abandoned Mine

③ [That Guy, Shuten]

Somehow, I was given the name of a master lolicon. (TL: *Not sure why he considers Shuten to be the name of a lolicon, but he references it a couple of times*) I've never heard Shuten's name in the game...wait? That Shuten-dōji? But I'm no leader. I'm not at home Heavenly Kings. But that doesn't mean he's not in Oeyama. (TL: *Oeyama or Mt. Ooe is the mountain Shuten-doji is rumored to inhabit*) Whatever.

Aside from that, I have powered up. I was just going to threaten them by slamming the ground, but somehow it became a wave attack, I suppose that's lucky?

Well, aside from that.

"Shuten-sama?" (Flare Reel)

The name remains after the misunderstanding...it feels nostalgic. Unexpectedly, it seems the name I know as a lolicon is seen here as a guardian. But it would be misleading to say that I am that helpful of a person, so I just stood there.

The sight of the bat wings flapping quickly to stay at my eye level is pleasant, but now what do I do with this child? I don't know how much she was hurt until I cut in, but the soft feeling of her appearance is undeniable.

For now there is no more reason for me to stay in this dungeon. So it's time to head upwards...at least until we reach the third level. My conscience felt guilty blaming her, but so long as I protect this child, it will not be easy to collect the fragments.

Anyway.

"Um" (Flare Reel)

Suspicion flickered in her gaze towards me. I want to say something, but anything I could say now would probably cause my cheeks to color in

embarrassment. It would be pointless to fill the cave with such unsuccessful words. As soon as our eyes met she diverted her gaze, though swimming in the vampire's bright red eyes I could see a wariness.

What!? I was thinking about something worrying, do I really look that bad? Well, the vampire hunters and even the boss of the tower couldn't take it and reacted fearfully.

"Well, I am Flare Reel!" (Flare Reel) Flare Reel-chan. What a cute name.

It seems that the day I pick up and hug her and so be labeled a lolicon is inescapable and not long from now. But I am different from those perverts, and will not suddenly transform into one.

"Is that so?" (Shuten)

"...uh-huh." (Flare Reel)

It is good to introduce yourself, but I have no name. I'm sorry.

Then I remembered the name Shuten. I guess this other Shuten won't mind me using it. Shuten (temporary). It will not come up even you search an amoeba. (TL: *he mentions an amoeba, but I don't know why? Probably that even searching in detail won't reveal the negative connotations of this name*)

"Um." (Flare Reel)

Placing my hand on my chest, I desperately tried to also introduce myself to comfort her. It seems all those years of self-introduction was in preparation for a moment like this. If you believe in such things, that is what I want to say.

And then somehow, Flare Reel's facial expression became more anxious.

I heard her take a deep breath. She flew in front of my eyes and lowered her head in a bow. The girl's long black hair drifted softly as at the same time she began to cry.

...No opponent can match this girl!

"Blood...the blood." (Flare Reel)

"Blood?" (Shuten)

"Will you let me drink some blood...?" (Flare Reel) "Ah." (Shuten)

So it was something like that. Perhaps she depleted her energy during the escape. Go ahead, I am a man who doesn't really care. Staggering my Kinagaishi, I showed my shoulder.

"Is it really okay?" (Flare Reel)

"Yeah." (Shuten)

"Thank you! ...Wah!?" (Flare Reel)

From the chest of my Kinagaishi, something suddenly began to glow. No longer able to stand it, I jumped back in that moment.

"Oh?" From what I could see, "Pearl piece?" (Shuten) Without a doubt, it was a pearl piece. I wonder what it means since it began to shine brighter at the moment she approached. Yet that amazing radiance just disappeared elsewhere when she was further away. At any rate it is a confirmed pearl piece.

"Pretty..." (Flare Reel)

"...Uh, you can drink." (Shuten)

"Ah, yes!" (Flare Reel)

A burning sensation. Clinging to my front like a hug, her fangs sunk into my neck. However, the feeling on my shoulder was somehow comfortable.

I don't know if there is some kind of effect from being bitten by a vampire, but I'm not too concerned with my Kinagaishi equipped. No matter that my magical defense is garbage...If there are any kind of abnormal status attacks then it will be blocked.

"...I wonder why it suddenly began to shine?" (Shuten) I wonder if there are certain activation conditions, since the radiance increased at the moment Flare Reel-chan jumped in. It's likely. Perhaps, this is an indication that it is harmless to Flare Reel. I feel kind of unpleasant at that thought.

...Whatever.

Wait.

That spoiled goddess certainly said the second time would be accompanied by severe pain...Surely I integrated THE☆ Poisonous fragment for the second time

just now!

Well, it can't be said that I was put out by the mistake though.

In the meantime Flare Reel's presence is gradually improving, and certainly her wing movements are getting stronger as her magic seems to be recovering.

"...Ah, what is this, wow, amazing...!" (Flare Reel) Although I heard a sultry voice in my ear I do not care. It doesn't matter.

"T'ank...yu...Shyuten...sama..." (Flare Reel) Hey, has my blood given her a dangerous effect!? I don't have that kind of night relationship!

...Such a thing is not the case. I wouldn't do such an immoral thing to a young girl.

"Are you almost done?" (Shuten)

Flare Reel sprung back in panic. The sound of her wings has changed from a pitiful flutter to a strong flap.

"How fantastic!" (Flare Reel)

The fact that the pupils of her eyes were steeped in a darker scarlet from the magic and that her overall atmosphere has become more vampiric has nothing to do with me.

She leaves, and the pearl piece returned to its original dirty color. "...Ah."

Well, here is something else to try.

"Here!" (Shuten)

"Eh?" (Flare Reel)

I hand it over to her. Then the pearl piece should regain its luster.

She will cherish the precious sparkling gemstone, since she began stroking the pearl piece lovingly. Eh, I do not want to say that in return it may make things hard on her. No, well, she's a superior species and something seems to have been considerably strengthened, so I think she can use it if she trains for awhile. Hmm? Is there no problem?

While walking, we soon returned to the dungeon's exit. The sun has already come out, have I spent the entire night underground?

“Uh...Thank you very much!” (Flare Reel) “Uh, yeah.” (Shuten)

Though distracted by the outside, Flare Reel turned around and grinned widely.

“Are you going?” (Flare Reel)

“Yeah.” (Shuten)

“I...am still not able to go out into the sun.” (Flare Reel) The downcast girl said so with a lonely expression.

Oh, I mean she is a vampire after all.

As I was silently thinking, she nodded with great significance. Eh, what?

“I’m going to get stronger, you’ll see!” (Flare Reel) “Oohh.” (Shuten)

“Then I can stand it.” (Flare Reel) You can stand it when you get stronger? What? Those innocent eyes twinkle so purely it’s painful.

“...Of course!!” (Shuten)

Who is to say that she cannot get out if she gets stronger? It feels wrong to simply leave like this, but it seems for the best for us to go separate ways. Funny, I thought it would ease my conscience but isn’t my conscience really sore now!?

I step forward into the sun.

“After getting stronger I will surely come to you!”

She waved her hand with small, modest smile. She will definitely get stronger.

Don I felt the pulse from a blast of magic. When I looked back at her she was smiling and holding a sharp crimson spear as if it were stained in blood.

...Oy oy, a weapon summons?!

It was just a little while ago that I had run into this girl and she was a helpless child.

“So you were skillful!!” (Shuten)

Still smiling that pure and innocent smile, she raised the spear so it made a vibrating sound and waved. I want to think that it looks small in her hands

because she is being considerate of me, yet I feel like I have caused something unusual. That is surely...because of me...From now on, I will not give my blood to a vampire so easily.

“I will ...become stronger. Like Shuten...” (Flare Reel) She vigorously wielded the crimson spear, and easily defeated the monsters of the first layer...

Chapter 8: Alfam Mountains ① [Geta of the Karasu-Tengu]

Hey, this is Shuten here.

...Even if the name Shuten sounds pleasant, I have not given up on my original name and will only go by Shuten temporarily. Although it will not be revealed even if you search an amoeba.

I have now arrived somewhere else. After leaving the hidden dungeon in the north, when I checked there was a reaction from the pearl piece that seemed to come from the third continent. Speaking of the third continent, it contains a mountain range with plentiful resources, a free trade city, and many dungeons that await the middle of the story. It was the most prosperous continent that appeared in Grimoire Lancer I. It is also the closest continent to the Far East Island “Jappon” where I was, and I think that perhaps this pearl detector activates when it is nearby. (TL: *I guess he has the radar mentioned by the goddess back in chapter 4. I checked back and that seems to be the only explanation, though I don't know how or when he got it. He also describes the detector as “beads” so I'm imagining a string of prayer beads*) Although I would have to ask that goddess, since it is a part I don't understand at all.

So I was now on the third continent. As for how that happened, naturally any fishing boats aren't going to let a demon ride, so I swam. I did not feel too confident in my physical strength, but I thought I could find the land mass pretty easily. The biggest enemy was exhaustion. Somewhere around the middle it began to get troublesome because I have been crawling through the water all this time, but I continued, knowing that if you fall into the trap of not moving forward then you will drown.

But after swimming awhile, when I arrived at the third continent it went like this...

“Oh, it's a demon?!” (Guard)

“Don’t be afraid, this is probably his limit!! Fight! Fight baaaack!” (Guard Leader)

I was surrounded by dozens of guards. Crouching in my direction, they jumped towards me.

Since I had almost completed my swim, first of all I wanted to find out wherever I had gone, and if the third continent was around here.

“Where is this?” (Shuten)

“Shut up! Kill that demon!!” (Guard Leader)

“Ah...” (Shuten)

I would say I was getting used to the feel of battle, but my movement was still slow. Perhaps this body’s performance is good, but it should get even better with the integrated power of the pearl pieces.

And that’s how it went.

The third continent was famous for its strong hostility towards demons. It should be said that this was due to a demon that had threatened the continent. It is a silver nine-tailed fox that the hero’s party will encounter. I remember struggling a lot in those days because it used an unreasonably strong magic on top of being a brutal level compared to the heroes’ party at the time. That reminds me, but I don’t know where the hero party is currently at. Anyway, if possible let’s pass them along somewhere else.

The moment I put my hands on the Demon Slayer, the guy who looks like the leader of the guards cried out. “Tsu!? Don’t let it go to the Alfam Mountains!! The kamiko of light is there now!” (Guard Leader)

Oh, thanks for telling me all this information.

Alfam Mountains.

It is a dungeon on the third continent where the hero will arrive at thirdly. The goal is to acquire the haze grass on top of one of the four mountains, crossing all four peaks. Since the whole mountain range is shrouded in clouds, all the roads are hazy and vision is considerably obscured.

One of the reasons to pick the haze grass is because somewhere in town a

fortuneteller tells you to “go pick it up,” and once you arrive at the summit you will encounter one of the Four Heavenly Demon Lords. In addition to the game-battle with the first of the Four Lords, the hero obtains information on the significance of the “??? Key (red)” that was previously acquired fighting one of the Devil king’s subordinates. It’s at this stage that the series of seven keys are revealed for the first time, and in the end, it is the same as the “key to the underground empire (orange)” that I already got by mistake.

Gathering the seven keys opens the gates to the underground empire and the Demon Castle. And this is the stage for the final battle...How nostalgic, I want to do it again.

“Anyway.” (Shuten)

It is easy to explain why I want to meet the hero. It is to pass on this stylish orange key I have. If I have it then they will never reach the underground empire, so even if it is awkward and my intentions are doubted I want to quickly hand it over. Having said that, is it better to wait for them to come down from gathering the haze grass, or climb the Alfam Mountains at a faster pace?

The Alfam Range has an atmosphere that it is a place of a fairy-tale, and so it has many kinds of demonic monsters that appear in the dungeon.

...some which are cow-like. (TL: *the word here is “ushi,” or cow, which I took to reference ushi-oni which are bovine-headed demons, like a minotaur*)

Shouldering the Demon Slayer, I gathered my resolve.

Unfortunately, from the reaction the location of the piece seems to have shifted...it certainly is a hidden item, though there should have been some Geta nearby that disable terrain damage. Demons are also weak in this way, and I don’t want to be poisoned so let’s face forward to obtain that item! (TL: *I wouldn’t want to remain barefoot either. The poison is explained later on*)

Once I stepped foot onto the mountain path entrance, my visibility was quickly hindered.

The dungeon of the Alfam Ranges is a type that leads upward to the top, unlike the dungeon I met the vampire girl in before this. Because the road often branches out, the capture difficulty is a little high. However, the monsters that

pop up are woefully weaker than the ones in my tower, so it shouldn't be anything of concern to the way I am now.

“Even so, a single person is lonesome.” (Shuten) I muttered to myself as I advanced through the haze.

Besides the great axe carried over my shoulder I have no belongings, so it feels a little lonely, but that cannot be helped. If there were companions traveling together at such a time, I wonder if we would be chatting casually. No wonder everyone in this kind of lonely dungeon might be serious.

But I am a demon and not an adventurer, so there's no reason to take on the trouble of a party.

Besides, whether or not there are even people who would team up in the first place...now I'm starting to become even more depressed and lonely.

“Flare Reel-chan, I wonder when you will be able to go out into the sunshine?” (Shuten)

I go along the mountain path while thinking about the appearance of the vampire girl.

Surely among the boss monsters that appear in Grimoire Lancer, there are demons who can become subordinates using magical contracts. Even if I fantasized happily about having a cute vampire as a contracted demon, in reality it doesn't work that way.

“Well, that's how it is. Anyway, just take the sandals, hand over the key to hero-kun quickly, and finish this dungeon.” (Shuten)

Perhaps that would be the most sensible.

While thinking of such things, I found the staircase. I did not encounter any monsters on the first level. Many of the monsters that appear in the Alfam Range are made of grass, rock, or fog. Fog monsters are disadvantageous for me because physical attacks mostly pass through, but since I have the Kinagaishi it is bad for their magic attacks as well. Even if it turns into a mudslinging contest, it will not become an opponent impossible to defeat.

“I wonder what this is?” (Shuten)

What appeared in front of my eyes were three rock-like monsters.

Indeed, I remembered similar monsters appearing on the first continent. It is the enhanced version of a different color. A common trait in an RPG.

“However, it does not matter.” (Shuten)

I pulled out the Demon Slayer, and swung. Breaking through the rock monster that is only capable of rolling, it was smashed into crimson dust. I cannot deny that it feels a bit like overkill, as it was only a single blow and while looking over it the other two escaped.

...As the goddess said, it seems the power of a dungeon class demon is now in me.

Re-shouldering the Demon Slayer from the palm of my hand I check my senses to make sure the group has moved on.

I will not even level up from this, the only real target is merely the geta and the hero.

Although I have the orange key right now, it's actually quite damaged, and probably won't help me much. Besides, I felt that the protagonists right now were surely in the wrong place. Though, since I'm a demon this might also be misunderstood as simply excuses.

It's not bad seeing the battle of the Four Lords, but it would not be good to involve myself in the story any more. Even if my power is dungeon class, that does not mean I'm going to go out to kill the heroes, and with my lack of battle experience I'll choose to be cautious.

“Now where can I find those Geta?” (Shuten)

It was certainly a pair of sandals with a high performance. Thinking about the kind of place this was, I heard the sound of the water ahead on the mountain road.

“...Ah, I remember.” (Shuten)

It's surely behind the waterfall flowing ahead with a bridge that crosses to the other side.

I have the impression that if I return to the Alfam Mountains after awhile, then

someone should have already made a bridge to pass over by their own efforts. But sadly, if the lock was already broken at this point then there would be no way to retrieve the treasure chest visible in the back.

The waterfall that flows through the mountain is quite spectacular, although it is not wide. As the sound gets closer along with the coolness, misty specks hit my cheeks. While feeling comfortable, I walked for a bit until I arrived beside the waterfall.

“I wanted to visit the backside of the waterfall leisurely, but...is it impossible?”
(Shuten)

Sorry, but it can't be helped. Since the bridge has not been fixed, I can't only come for sightseeing. Well, if it's with my current physical ability I'll manage somehow.

With a jump, I leap through the waterfall and land on the other side behind it.

It is hard to see it hidden behind the grass, but it was certainly a treasure chest.

“Open up~” (Shuten)

Once I opened it there was definitely a pair of Geta inside.

“Terrain damage disabled...in time for the Poisonous Swamp.” (Shuten)

I would never willingly enter it, but even so I had gathered the right equipment if needed.

While remembering the weaknesses of my demon tribe, I feel joy at overcoming it as I once again jump through the back of the waterfall.

“Now then.” (Shuten)

Now I just need to pass on this key to hero-kun. While spinning the key with my index finger triumphantly, I headed towards the edge of the Alfam Range.

Let's go visit the protagonist, Crane-Fafnir!

Chapter 9: Alfán Mountains ② [Hero Crane]

Crane Fafnir is the current Kamiko of Light. (TL: *Or, the Child of God, or of Light, as he is also referred to as in this chapter*)

Born in a farmhouse, he helped his parents to grind the fresh flour and occasionally fight with the monsters in the forest, where he lived until the age of twelve. When the demons and monsters became active, and he heard that the Kamiko of Light finally arrived at the Devil King Castle, for some reason at the same time Crane got magical powers.

It did not take long for him to realize it was the power of the Kamiko of Light.

The previous generation's Kamiko of Light had fought fiercely as one of the strongest magic librarians from the Devil King Defense Force, and died to overthrow the Devil King to allow a temporary peace to come to this world.

You see, two years ago the Devil King Defense Force had been gathered and selected, each one of the five people the best from their respective kingdoms.

The Empire brought their strongest magic librarian from the best combat group.

From the Republic of Halberdia was a world traveler blessed with a certain mutation.

The Kingdom selected their sword Excalibur, the best swordsman.

The Principality called the highest-ranked adventurer in the guild they had. (TL: *It calls them "rank-braver" but I think adventurer is more easily understood*)

And from the Professor country, the single child chosen by the God of Light to bear the outrageous spiritual power from the God.

However, the battle was extremely fierce, and in order to barely defeat the Devil King the five warriors died. At the last moment when the national prides of the kingdoms fell, the light of the goddess scattered, and Crane Fafnir became the successor to the Child of Light.

"Fuu... I wonder if it will be okay. That guy was barely defeated by the

continent's best five, but it should be better this time, right?" (Crane)

"It will be okay with Crane. At any rate, I'll let you recognize my ability." (Rudi)

"Well, Rudi's foolishness aside, Crane is strong." (Haruna)

Since they were tired from the dramatic climb, the three people were sitting on rocks and taking a short break.

One person is Crane, the Kamiko of Light, the second who followed was the young Prince Rudi of the Kingdom, and the third was the adventurer Haruna from the Principality. After Crane left the Professor Country, he had gained these two important companions on the road. Now these three people were continuing on their adventure, step-by-step searching for clues to the Devil King.

"I'm not sure which of my words were foolish, but...well anyway. At the very least we have here the nations' best including Crane, the best mage, and the Kingdom's strongest swordsman, myself. Do not worry." (Rudi)

"Thank you, Rudi." (Crane)

"Hey, wait! You have forgotten this one from the Principality, the priestess Haruna-chan!" (Haruna)

"Ha ha! This F-ranked adventurer should just be thankful we picked her up." (Rudi)

"I cannot accept that?!" (Haruna)

"Ahaha, I will also depend on Haruna." (Crane)

While gnawing dried meat, Crane laughed. Sitting in front of him is the red-haired swordsman who had become a close friend since they met in the Kingdom. Truthfully, his sword arms are strong indeed. The King of the Kingdom was also a powerful man who could fight against the three all together, though he knew that the three would definitely become stronger on this adventure.

The girl with pink hair down her back and staff was Haruna. On the way to the Principality, she had fallen multiple times from hunger and passed out where they found her, and after her recovery she had become a reliable companion.

"Hehe." (Crane)

“What’s so funny?” (Haruna)

The two looked suspiciously at his involuntary smile. Though he continued on this dangerous journey, he felt secure if these two people were here.

“But what was it that the fortune teller said? If you go get the flowers at the top of the Alfam Mountains, you will get more clues to the Devil King...” (Rudi)

“After that, ‘you will meet a tremendous ‘power’ in the road. It is not an enemy, but it is not a friend.’ I remember better than you do Rudi.” (Haruna)
(TL: *man, the fortune teller is on point with changes on the world*)

“Silence, you guys. ...However, the ‘clues to the Devil King’ and the ‘Power.’ Hey Crane, if this is true then this unresponsive mountain range might give us some hints.” (Rudi)

Rudi and Haruna were remembering and discussing what had happened with the fortuneteller in the port city. It worried Crane, but he also thought it would be better to ignore any prophecies not related to the goddess.

“Well, if there’s nothing then let’s go to the Empire. Because the only country that we haven’t gone to is the Empire.” (Crane)

“Empire? ... I don’t want to go...” (Haruna)

You should go to the former Republic, even though it was swept up by the Empire there may be clues leading to the Devil King in that area.” (Rudi)

“Oh, that’s right.” (Crane)

Two years ago, the five people and pride of the five countries visited the Devil King Castle. It was the Empire that had spearheaded the attack and allowed the Devil King to be defeated.

Originally, if it were not for the threat of the Devil King the five countries would be incompatible, and because the Empire had swallowed the Republic, the other three nations, including the Kingdom and Principality, created an alliance that opposed the Empire.

Crane, who is the Child of Light, has traveled leisurely because of the alliance, but in the Empire he must act quietly. This is also true for Rudi, the prince of the Kingdom.

However, the remaining hint to the demon kingdom is in the Empire, or in the Far East Island Jappon next to the third continent...Other than that they currently had no idea.

“Well anyway, whether we go to the empire or not, it is obvious to conclude we should go up to the top of the Alfam Mountains first. My stamina has almost recovered...and you guys?” (Crane)

“I’m fine, what about Haruna?” (Rudi)

“OK – OK –, do not worry!” (Haruna)

Pyonko pyonkoko (sfx for bounciness)

Crane turned gentle eyes towards the jumping Haruna. Rudi slightly shrugged his shoulders and jumped off the rock lightly.

“Well then, there is still a little bit to the summit, but let’s do our best.”
(Crane)

Once he saw Rudi and Haruna nod, the party again began to capture the Alfam Ranges.

And at that time.

“Tsu!?” (Crane)

“Get down!” (Rudi)

“Wha-What is this...pressure...!?!” (Haruna)

Crane reflexively raised his wand, Rudi stepped forward to protect his friend, and Haruna began to look around fearfully.

Surrounding the three was a tremendous pressure. The looming violent intimidation, that was dull enough to be considered heavy pressure, left them no choice but watch their surroundings as they were sandwiched between the cliffs.

“Where is...!?!”

At Rudi’s shaky voice, Crane’s eyes widened. That brave fellow’s eyes were shaking, his lips trembling with the dregs of fear.

Although this mighty force suddenly appeared Crane pretended this was

merely a warm-up...For Crane could feel nothing but fear, and who it is said there is none who are his opponent in the Kingdom, this might be the first time he has felt this.

The air of the overwhelmingly strong.

“Please...Where is the source...?!?” (Haruna)

A magical pulse emitted from Haruna’s staff. At the very least, there would be no way to retreat if they didn’t know where this pressure was coming from. However, the response may have been too late. Before her explorative magic could demonstrate its effect, Rudi shouted at the shadow of a person in front of them.

It is not a human. The two twisting black horns insist on that point.

In response to its arrival there was the sound of wooden clogs, and the dark blue Kinagaishi fluttered in a sudden wind. The black aura clinging to it is filled with a torrent of “power.”

Is a monster with this kind of power even from this world?

“Ah...ah...Aaaaaah!!” (Rudi)

“Wait Rudi!!” (Haruna)

Unable to suppress his trembling, Rudi swept the sheath from his waist and tried to jump at the demon, but the echoes of Haruna’s screaming voice stopped him.

Meanwhile, the demon-like silhouette did not budge. Feeling the swordsman’s pressure from Rudi, Crane gulps and also held completely still.

“Wait...” (Haruna)

Next to the stationary Rudi whom she pulled back, Haruna passed by him step by trembling step.

What was she doing? To Crane who thought of trying to stop her, he remembered; In the town, they had heard a prophecy.

[After that, ‘you will meet a tremendous ‘power’ in the road. It is not an enemy, but it is not a friend.’ I remember better than you do Rudi.]

What frightful power. Was the demon in front of him an existence of “power” itself?

“W-was...there s-something you needed?” (Haruna)

Crane gratefully admired her for her courage. And was ashamed at himself who has done nothing. She spoke without hostility, against the threat of fainting from merely approaching it. Crane felt he would be killed if he cast a spell even once. It was the same for Rudi, who did not move while he gripped his sword.

“No, only a delivery.” (Shuten)

“Tsu!”

It talked to her. And certainly there did not seem to be any hostility. Purely replying to the words of Haruna, establishing a conversation. To Haruna who is a few steps away from the man, what does he look like? Crane didn’t know, but had no choice but to watch her talk without stepping forward.

“Deliver...what?” (Haruna)

“It’s originally yours. I ended up getting it unintentionally. So I’ll pass it to you.” (Shuten)

“Er, Ah...” (Haruna)

The man pulled a familiar object from the inside of his Kinagaishi. It is that key. And it is the same one attained but a different color.

“Oh, thank...you.” (Haruna)

With the gentle clink of metal, the key fell into the hands of Haruna. To the unexpectedly polite and carefree man, Haruna lowers her head, shivering.

Even without doing something wrong, if they fought now they would fall before a single blow. It is not supposed to be that way.

“See you.” (Shuten)

“U-umm wait!”

The man really did seem to only deliver the item, as he had already turned around.

Crane and Rudi intensified their vigilance because they did not understand why Haruna called out, but her words were certainly with the same thoughts as their own.

“Oh, do you know what this key is...?”

“You’ll understand once you get to the top.” (Shuten)

“Tsu...!”

Only then did the man disappear into the fog.

As soon as the pressure was released a feeling of weakness enveloped the three of them.

“Puha...! (*sfx for sudden exhalation*) I-I thought it was strange...!” (Haruna)

“No, thanks to Haruna I was saved, thank you...” (Crane)

“...” (Rudi)

In the hands of Haruna who sits down in her spot is held the orange key. It is exactly the same shape as the red key of Crane. There was doubt about what exactly it is, and apparently the question would be resolved if they go to the top.

However, rather than thinking about such a thing, the brains of the three people were filled with the mystery of who that man was.

“...Rudi?” (Crane)

“...I am still weak.” (Rudi)

“To think Rudi would say such a thing.” (Haruna)

And from the boy who had not uttered a word, the two others naturally turned their heads at the murmur. He finally re-sheathed the sword he was clutching.

“It may be that everywhere we’ve been there only happened to be weak monsters that come out. Such a monster being alive...We have to become stronger. We have to defeat the Devil King.” (Crane)

“Yeah, you’re right...” (Rudi)

“Let’s do our best one step at a time?!” (Haruna)

The strong point of these three is that they never succumb to fear. Now, it doesn’t matter if they lose. There was hope that their growth has not reached its limits.

“Well, shall we go? I pray the clue at the top of the mountain is not as terrifying as that guy.” (Crane)

“Ah, the first person there gets a one on one.” (Rudi)

“Even if it rushes you, don’t do that!” (Haruna)

Looking towards the summit they do not yet see, the three people renewed their determination.

The heated battle of the three people against one of the Four Heavenly Demon Lords on the mountain summit, and their easy victory, is another story.

Chapter 10: Wendell Plateau [Exciting Encounter, with Hakumen Nine-Tails]

TL: *Hakumen is a mix of Haku and Kamen which means “white” and “mask” respectively. This chapter’s character is most likely based off of the legends of Hakumen no Mono (or “White-Faced One”), a female fox demon who is said to have seduced and become a concubine to at least four Eastern Kings (two Chinese, one Indian, and One Japanese) and drove them to madness, destroying their kingdoms. However, in Japan she was struck down and turned into a rock that was still capable of destroying everything it touched.*

=====

“Uoooooooooooooooooh!!” (Shuten)

This is the best! I’m touched right now!!

I could hardly suppress my excitement from exploding! I was seriously being overcome by my emotions and about to cry!!

After finishing my errands in the Alfán Mountains, I quickly exited the bridge and had finally returned to the entrance. If it’s this place, I probably won’t get another chance like this. Therefore, to relieve this explosive tension I have endured patiently, I will release this emotion here! With the Demon Slayer, I raised both hands and shouted.

People, be inspired by his cry from the heart!

“Why? ...Because I encountered the original protagonist!” (Shuten) (TL: *haha, who wouldn’t want to meet a character from their favorite game?*)

I had come across a scene from the game I played. Even if it’s a favorite work, it could be said that I had become uselessly excited by this.

“Is it the first time they are infiltrating the Alfán Ranges, with only Rudius and Haruna as companions? Well, they’re still in the process of visiting the four countries where all the companions are gathered. Then will Justa and Grendel join soon? My heart is pounding.” (Shuten) However, I did not have the leeway

to stalk them. There is no doubt that they will meet up with the main character, Crane, but from this point onward to the final dungeon they must become stronger.

According to the words of the goddess, I am at the same level as the enemies of the last dungeon. Yet, although my level has risen from incorporating one of the Pearl Pieces, I am still low-leveled and on the same rank as that dungeon's small fry. If I do not become strong, then even in an emergency I would be unable to respond. As a demon I was even suppressed by that magician like an object. In order to live alone, I must become even stronger.

Besides that, the Pearl Pieces themselves are also an issue. I gave one to Flair Reel and one is in my body, but there are still 13 pieces scattered across the world. So if the worst occurs and the story of Grimoire Lancer II breaks down, then it might become a world of despair dominated by the Devil King.

...For a moment, I wondered if it might be more convenient for me underneath the Devil King, but no, I would still be a subject of oppression. If I am satisfied with the way my body is now, then I might as well give up now.

"Well, this was exciting, but shouldn't I be heading out soon?" (Shuten) Originally I went to the Alfam Ranges to meet the heroes and to acquire the Geta I'm now wearing. And there was another reason to bother traveling across the ocean to get to the third continent.

"Is the reaction from the Pearl Piece further West?" (Shuten) Instinctively my brain detects it further west than the Alfam Mountains. This is from the Pearl Piece sensor the goddess gave me.

"I mean, any further and I'll be entering the Empire. Obviously, as a demon I will be crossing the border without permission?"

I also seem to remember a town where demons live somewhere around the fifth continent... That's clearly the way to go then. Accordingly, that also means that the monsters who wander around should be strong.

Pyon, Pyon While jumping from tree to tree I headed West.

On the border between the Empire and the Duchy there was surely that dense forest "Hana Flower Forest." (TL: *Or "Hana Hana" which means "flower,*

flower” so I just mixed both worlds here) “Towards Hana Flower Forest; for some reason the Plateau Dungeon tends to be underground. When going through for the first time you are certain to get lost if you don’t follow Justa who will become a friend later...how nostalgic.” (Shuten) Crane is from the Professor Country, Rudius is the prince from the Kingdom, Haruna is an adventurer from the Principality, the narcissist Justa is from the former Republic, and Grendel is an imperial magic librarian.

Unlike the first game where there are five people from the beginning, Grimoire Lancer II allowed the pleasure of bringing the group together. The last companion Grendel is a magic librarian. I got excited at the time when I remembered that, like the first hero, he was also a strong Imperial magic librarian. Well, the first hero was the strongest among the magic librarians, while Grendel was the weaker magic librarian at the 10th seat...

By the way, the main reason why the Republic was absorbed by the Empire in two years was because each country sent their best warriors, and there was a setting that only the Empire had resources remaining. Just below the first hero, in the Empire there are still nine people with a certain degree of ability, while in the Republic the only warrior was the mutated Halberdia.

Well, the empire was stronger.

While thinking of such a thing as I leapt westward, by the time I noticed the sun was setting and it was getting dark. Although my night vision is sharp, clumsiness is another matter.

“...Well, I should rest here since I still have much further West to go.”

Around here there should certainly be a place called Wendell Plateau.

There is the memory of some cabbage growing around in certain places, but I’ll leave it at is for now.

After returning to the port city from the Alfian Ranges, the main character Crane was supposed to travel this road. While considering this as I walked, the trees became shorter and shorter, almost like flowers.

By the way, I feel like a boss appeared here, but what was it again?

“It’s not a plant-type boss, what was it that comes out here?” (Shuten)

Leisurely walking as I jogged my memory a boulder was sitting in front of me. I concluded there was no choice but to interfere, as this was blocking the passage.

If it's the me now I will break the rock with a single kick, so grandly I jumped up and kicked. The rock crumbled. At that moment, the evening light reflected dazzlingly on the high plateau.

An intense magical presence dispersed into the surroundings, and instantly my brain filled in the missing pieces of the puzzle, realizing what I have done...

“Ah.” (Shuten)

My voice leaked out.

I remembered. This is an event flag. Ruidius would break the rock, and what will emerge is...Hakumen Nine-tails! A beast with waves of silver fur!

Even in the original game, it is the middle boss that is treated as traumatic by everyone...Can you beat me now...!?

Trying to pull out the big axe from my back while I click my tongue at my blunder – “Eh, cho, Kyaaaaaaaaaah!!”

“...Eh?”

In the place where the light stopped.

A woman who is the same as me had fallen down.

In the nude.

The sound of crackling sparks that burst from a comfortable campfire.

While listening to it, I was working on skewering the monster pieces that I harvested. Even at night, I can occasionally hear other sounds from birds and monster deer. Balancing the meat to roast in the fire, I glance in front of me. A tail of bushy silver fur that seems soft to the touch comes into sight. It's a fox's tail. And nine of them, fluffy, right in front of my eyes. The tail that is in front of me is completely turned away. The body as well.

Silver hair neatly cut short, two white pointed ears, and shining black almond eyes. Unlike our first encounter, she has clothes on properly. It was a beautiful

robe.

Huh.

How did this happen?

I pulled out a piece of meat that had roasted nicely, and went around to present it in front of her.

“I was wrong. I’m sorry! So, well, please listen to me for a while~ Na? Na?”
(Shuten) “...” (Nine-tails)

Anyway, there is no other island for her to cling to.

“No, you see, if such a big rock is in the middle of a passage, it’s normal to break it? It’s an annoyance to go the long way around. See, the conditions were all set up.” (Shuten) “...There’s something wrong with people who come in the middle of the night.” (Nine-tails) “No, that’s not it! I never thought that there was sealed soul sleeping there!” (Shuten) With that explained.

...In short, while sealed in the rock she was sleeping at night, and so was in an unsuspecting state that had nothing to do with magical power. So in that brief moment she could not turn into her fox form, and so was thrown out in her most vulnerable state. By the way, the clothes she is wearing right now seems to be made by herself with magic. She who can use magic is useful.

There was no mistake that she was the silver Nine-tailed fox that I knew. Known in the Empire country as a villainess. I thought that the country would surely be more lenient if they knew of her beauty, but that’s it.

In the games I only knew about her in the form of a fox. It was during the daytime that Rudius broke the rock to start the game event.

“Ho, since you’ve been sealed does that mean you’re starving? If you don’t mind me asking (良ければどーぞ).” (Shuten) “...” (Nine-tails)

No, of course not.

To the enemy that the heroes fought so desperately against the mood seemed to have changed for the worst, but I’d rather resolve the situation without fighting. But no, I was wrong.

She took the skewer silently, then again turned her back to me.

Well, at least she received it?

Returning to my work from my seat on the stump, I gazed into the fire. Although I had originally planned to camp out, I wonder if it was supposed to end up like this.

“Hey you.” (Nine-tails)

“What’s the matter?” (Shuten)

As usual she did not look at me, but I reacted to the miserable words and raised my head.

“Right now, what year is it?” (Nine-tails)

“I don’t know exactly, but...I feel like it’s in the 1200s.” (Shuten) “...so.” (Nine-tails)

The villainess of the Empire had been sealed. Silver Nine Tails. If it is the same Silver Nine-tails I know, how long has she been alive? In addition, how long was she sealed?

“One hundred years...?...” (Nine-tails)

The answer came from her own mouth. A hundred years. It’s a mind-boggling amount of time.

Perhaps it was the length of time she was sealed.

“Anyway, as for being in the middle of the plateau” (Shuten) “I was sealed at the top of the Alfam ranges, only it fell and rolled down here. Although it would have been better timing if it had cracked then...Since I do not intend to talk, will you not shut up?” (Nine-tails) “Yeah.” (ういつす *TL: or Uissu*)

I wonder why you are even talking to me.

Well, there is a part of me that feels some sympathy. Being sealed for a hundred years would drive me crazy. Meanwhile, my mouth moved as I talked unconsciously.

“How rude!The Empire absorbed the Republic, so now it is in conflict with the three countries’ alliance.” (Shuten) A flickering glance.

“The Devil King who was defeated ten years ago recently revived.” (Shuten)

Another flickering glance.

“Come to think of it –” (Shuten)

“Be quiet.” (Nine-tails)

“Yeah.” (Shuten) (*TL: also “Uissu from earlier*) I mean, why are you still with me? *Nugigi (sfx for rustling)* Well, my reason is because I saw the girl naked, and in order to make it up to her I offered food in her homeless state.

“...”

She looked up at the sky in a daze. Occasionally her fox ears twitched which I thought was cute, but I don’t know exactly what she is thinking.

However...I cannot think that a girl like this is bad. And certainly her style is also good and lovely. I think she’s cute and beautiful. My impression from her fragile and lonely air did not connect to the title of villainess who angered the Empire.

“...It is convenient for me though.” (Nine-tails)

“Hmm~?” (Shuten)

“My attraction skill, is it not effective?” (Nine-tails) “E, did you use such a thing?” (Shuten)

“I’m not using it...No, nothing! You didn’t hear anything!” (Nine-tails) “Ah so. By the way, what kind of effect is it? It might be working slightly.” (Shuten) “Being unable to think of anything other than myself, and wanting to attack me even now.” (Nine-tails) She told me such a thing. And, is looking over here rather seriously.

Pfft (sfx for light laugh)

“Hahaha, there’s an excessively self-conscious woman here!” (Shuten) “Are you kidding me!?” (Nine-tails)

“...Well, I understand that the skill seems to be a struggle.” (Shuten) “Well, then it really isn’t working then.” (Nine-tails)

Having shrugged her shoulders and answered, she turned away with a sigh. I prefer this good girl to the goddess, so kidding around with her is a natural

temptation for a guy like me. No, I guess it was bad to tease her.

Yeah, my conscience was being a little unreasonable. It is true I saw her naked.

“In order to kill...It might be quicker to reduce the surrounding area to ash in order to kill this person if we were to battle. Haah, why is it like this?” (Nine-tails) (TL: *this dialogue here gave me some trouble, but it seems like she is considering a “scorched earth” policy in order to get rid of Shuten*) “Hey, isn’t it good that you were able to get out?” (Shuten) “Well, I will thank you honestly for breaking the seal.” (Nine-tails) “Hey can’t you just write off previous rudeness then?!” (Shuten) “Someone like you wouldn’t want to apologize for nothing right?” (Nine-tails) “Haven’t I already apologized sincerely?” (Shuten)

“I have decided not to forgive you until you stop this joking attitude.” (Nine-tails) With her closed eyes her eyelashes are long, but I think that kind of interest seems to be different from being charmed.

“Forget it.” (Nine-tails)

And with a wave of her hand, the conversation ended immediately.

It’s useless even if you rub your hands together. (TL: *like in a prayer I guess, so even if you were to pray it wouldn’t change things.*) “...Even so, a powerful demon like you is in such a place. Moreover, with such a personality, you are very different from the demons I know of.” (Nine-tails) “Well, I’m sorry I have such a terrible personality. Besides that, various things have come up and I’m on a journey.” (Shuten) “Haah.” (Nine-tails sighed)

“Oh, are you interested?” (Shuten)

“I think you are also broken.” (Nine-tails)

“Dang it!” (Shuten)

Despite being told to shut up, somehow our conversation continued. It’s not like I will forsake someone even if they are stiff. I guess that’s all. Somehow, it is also undeniable that there is a part of me enjoying the conversation I have not had for a long time.

Perhaps, it is the same for the person in front of me as well. Perhaps, because

of the charm and seal, after a long time she can have a decent conversation, though there may be other circumstances beyond that.

“I get it... the charm skill was activated unconsciously, and so you who was a beauty soon became known as a courtesan.” (Shuten) “Aah, what?! To think even after 100 years this information would be passed down in such a way.” (Nine-tails) “It is merely gossip.” (Shuten)

Even at my joke she showed a glum expression on her face. Well, it’s natural. This misunderstanding had remained and been handed down, and I think it may hit a little too close to home. Would it have been better to have kept silent about it? I wouldn’t have minded but...well, I will know soon enough.

“...Then I will go from here. Thank for going out of your way to take care of the rock.” (Nine-tails) Rising from the rock fragments, she turned towards me.

“Hmm? Where are you going this late at night?” (Shuten)

“The Empire. Just wait here while I look a little bit.”

“I don’t know what you are doing, but are you strong against the Asuko demon?” (Shuten) “...I don’t know about such a thing.” (Nine-tails)

In her dark eyes dwelt a hard anger for someone. Probably someone in the empire. Even if I tell her the Imperial family may be better now than her first encounter, she seems to have no intention to change.

But I’m not sure under what circumstances she was sealed...

“Hey, when you asked me what effect the charm skill gave because ‘it might be slightly working’ what did you mean?” (Nine-tails) “Ah? It’s interesting. It’s the kind of thing where I think of such things as cute or beautiful or whatever, isn’t that a kind of effect?” (Shuten) “That’s because I am genuinely cute.” (Nine-tails)

“You just wanted to say that.” (Shuten)

“How is it like that?...Good-bye.” (Nine-tails)

In the end with a light shining on her almond eyes, she walked towards Hana Flower Forest.

“...I won’t be remaining here then.” (Shuten)

While biting into the roasted meat, I had no choice but to mutter as such.

Chapter 11: Hana Flower Forest ① [Entering the Empire]

That night after breaking camp and picking up the Demon Slayer, I started following after the nine-tailed girl who had walked towards Hana Flower Forest.

Although it is only a guess, it also seems that there is a pearl piece inside Hana Flower Forest. One thing though, it covers an area larger than any of the dungeons visited so far. Because of that I was left with a bad feeling so early in the morning.

“...Somehow, I feel the position of the pearl piece is moving.” (Shuten)

I would like to hope that is just my imagination, but in fact it is unlikely. Probably someone had already taken the pearl piece, and is wandering around.

Coming from the Hana Flower Forest, I think it would have been better if a human had taken it, but that seems not to be the case. If it's wandering around in the forest, perhaps the monsters are influenced by the pearl pieces?

“...How depressing.” (Shuten)

Obviously if the monster that captured the pearl had lost their sanity, then I must defeat it. But just like I was stupidly strengthened by a pearl piece, the monster will also have become stronger. One of the reasons I cannot afford to ignore these is because of the presence of protagonist-kun as they pass the Alfam Ranges. In other words, since I'm walking through the Hana Flower Forest now, the heroes will be entering the Wendell Plateau.

It's not my job to clear the story...though if my feelings are taken into account, I would possibly like to grow and help kill the Devil King. As a fan.” (Shuten)

Well, I do not have any kind of selfless intentions. Simply as a fan, I feel like I want to lead the story to completion.

For that reason, I am motivated to try my best.

“Well then.” (Shuten)

I shouldered the Demon Slayer, as I continued to head towards the Hana Flower Forest.

“Well, shall I go?” (Shuten)

From the road of Wendell Plateau, I step into the Hana Flower Forest. In an instant the scenery changes from grassland to forest, is it not unique to RPGs? Rather than gradually becoming a forest, from this point it just unnaturally becomes the Hana Flower Forest!

How interesting.

The scenery of the ground floor featured a natural path with tree roots growing through the walls of the dungeon. This Hana Flower Forest dungeon makes it difficult to reach the Empire’s territory unless you move along one of the two sides.

Since I found it difficult to see, I decided to jump up into the tree branches for the time being to look at the situation.

This dungeon is directly connected to high Wendell Plateau, and boasts a surprisingly low number of layers with two levels. However, its area is vast, and the strength of the monsters is also decent. Well, since it’s weaker than the demons in the lower levels of the Habuil Tower I don’t really care.

There are several types of monsters found in this forest, but I’ll omit it because none of them will defeat the Demon Slayer. The problem is more than that...

“There is a man from the Imperial Academy...?” (Shuten)

Unlike other countries, the Empire has a combat organization stronger than the army. It is an organization known as the Imperial Academy, a “history compilation committee” created under the name of the emperor.

In the Imperial Academy the various groups are categorized into departments, and among those skilled in combat is a member of the Imperial Hall from the Imperial House.

In the first game, the main character is a member of the Imperial Academy, and in II one group member appeared from the Imperial Academy. However,

the spotlight is not so much on the inner workings of the Empire until after the third game.

Finally explained in III, the Imperial Academy is revealed as the kind of organization that professionally “fights for the good of the Empire by exterminating foreign enemies and compiling information in order to create a convenient history for the Empire” by any means. To create a glorious history for the Empire and emperors, all enemies are destroyed to decorate the history books beautifully.

I remember feeling like giving a rebuttal at the time.

What do you mean that the characters we used in I and II as the hero and friends were terrible villains?!

So those guys were like that...

Despite the long explanation, there is nothing else I want to say.

“Was there such a development in the story of II?” (Shuten)

This is it.

In II, there shouldn't have been any scenes where the Imperial House comes to the table. It could be said on behalf of the writers that the deployment of the Academy combat experts was unnecessary. But then why is there a human from the Imperial Academy staking out the Hana Flower Forest?

“...No, I know that.” (Shuten)

It might be because of the Pearl pieces.

There is almost no doubt. With the untimely entrance of the silver nine-tails and the rampaging monsters it seems likely that the Imperial House heard of the pearl pieces' enhancement.

“...Though the monstrous pearl-enhanced beasts have not been defeated yet. No, that is only my assumption.” (Shuten)

It'll probably be bad if these monsters are defeated by the Imperials who then pick up the pearl pieces. I don't know what might happen if such a sample of the pieces is studied there. The magic of the Empire is far more aggressive than the magic of the Principality or the Kingdom.

“So it can’t be helped?” (Shuten)

It seems after all that I will not change my policy of collecting the pearl pieces.

“While searching for signs of the pearl piece, I must move so as not to be found by the people from the Academy...how troublesome. Well, I feel like I will be exposed if that happens.”

Though it could be said to be inevitable that I’d be discovered, there is no choice but to try and not be found.

Saku I jump over the trees.

For the time being, let’s just cross the tops of the trees while pursuing the reaction of the pearl piece.

I was discovered.

“A demon...!?” (Imperial A)

“It has extraordinary power...! Is it a variant!?” (Imperial B)

“No, in the first place why is a demon here!?” (Imperial C)

1, 2, 3, 4...? I am surrounded by about ten human people from the Empire. Originally I was up in the tree, but I jumped down to search for the pearl piece and was found out. No, I wonder about that too. It seems the sound of hopping through the tree branches will surely reveal your presence.

Iya~ I did such a stupid thing. Nahahahahahaha. Hahaha...

“Ah, no, I’m not a suspicious guy. Hey, is this the road?” (Shuten)

“To put on a magic resistant Kinagaishi...No, what is that Oni...?! In its body it has a high magical defense otherwise...is such a thing even possible...?!?”
(Imperial)

“Eh, is that so? There is even a magical defense in my body?” (Shuten)

“D, Don’t come over!!” (Imperial)

Aah, I’m nervous.

I wonder what to do about this situation. It’s my first time to have heard about a natural magic defense in my body, but I’m afraid to test it, so let’s end

this here. I don't think it will be easy, but what else can I do?

I'm close to the reaction of the pearl piece and want to go retrieve it quickly... but it would be annoying if they chase after me.

A dubious group dressed in black surrounding a demon wearing blue. "No, no, it is a demon after all!! It is the enemy of our Empire's magic! Shoot!!" (Imperial Captain)

"Uottototo!?" (Shuten) (TL: *the sound for basically being caught off guard, or losing balance, that kind of thing*)

At that same time the surrounding group exceeding ten people attacked from many angles. Flying bullets of flame and water whips are indeed difficult to respond to when spears grow from the ground at the same time.

Ho, yeah, well, haha!

At the moment I am reminded of dodgeball when you are the last remaining person. But you know me, it's times like these when I shine best in class.

No, let's forget about my previous life. It just makes me sad.

"aaaaAim Properlyyyyyyy!!" (Imperial Captain)

The human who seemed to be the captain signaled them to intensify the attack. I shied away from being hit because it looks painful, but I also think this will surely increase my visual acuity and bodily response. No, I don't have to answer when asked why I avoid them, but it seems for now I will be relying on the Demon Slayer for a while.

I wonder if it was because I took my time, but as soon as I heard a commotion as if from enemy reinforcements.

Ah— Geez, no more please?

And at that time I placed my hand on the Demon Slayer

All of a sudden flames break through the surroundings. The power of it was enough to instantly turn a person into charcoal. As I still didn't know what had happened, the blackened men fell like rags. The flames ran, spreading out gradually as it caught up to and killed the people from the Academy.

...Well, I guess it is that. It is fox fire.

“Thanks, you saved me.” (Shuten)

“...I didn’t see you asking for help.” (Nine-tails)

A silver girl leapt down from somewhere to land lightly in front of me. Her fluffy nine tails fell to the ground according to natural gravity. Unlike when we met yesterday, she is dressed in the uniform of the Imperial Academy.

“What are those clothes?” (Shuten)

“Because I cannot stay in clothes made with magical power forever, I changed them. So...” (Nine-tails)

What an awful kind of tribe to be created in.

Once she cut off her words, she continued to look around in amazement.

“Did you also obtain information on them?” (Nine-tails)

“No? I wondered. But I don’t know.” (Shuten)

“Just because you say so doesn’t mean we are the same. You see, I could not ignore a man I owe dying right in front of me. I just thought this was a good way to repay my debt.” (Nine-tails)

“Thanks~ Thanks~” (Shuten)

“You’re a crazy man.” (Nine-tails)

She says so in amazement, wondering why she is acquainted with such a thing. That’s too harsh, tears are coming out.

“Didn’t you go to the Empire?” (Shuten)

“If you want me to say, then first tell me why you came here?” (Nine-tails)

“I have a purpose in this forest.” (Shuten)

“...alright. I tried to go, but who are these guys?” (Nine-tails)

“Oh, the Imperial Academy from the present era.” (Shuten)

“Imperial...Academy?” (Nine-tails)

Most likely I was hindered by the people from the Imperial Academy. Right now these are small fry that can be incinerated like kindling, but there is still a stronger guy coming from the Imperial Academy. That is one from the boss class.

“The Imperial Academy is the special forces organization originally founded by the emperor, made to work behind the scenes to create a glorious history by any means for the Empire apparently.” (Shuten)

“tsu...! The emperor who founded it was probably not Talos V...!” (Nine-tails)

“Who is Talos-san?” (Shuten)

“...I was stupid to have listened to you.” (Nine-tails)

Her facial expression changed into a grim one, and then turning back around she leapt away.

Well, whenever I see her irritated face, I wonder what kind of acquaintance she had. Does fate have something to do with it?

Or, the Emperor really was seduced by her charm, which shook the country under his influence or something like that.

No way.

Chapter 12: Hana Flower Forest ② [Pearl Piece Position]

After the situation where the people of the Imperial Academy were turned to charcoal, even the Nine-tails had left, leaving me alone. The smell of burnt humans filled my nostrils, but the fact none of the surrounding vegetation was ignited showed the nine-tailed girl's skill despite the fire power. Though I still don't know if the dark uniforms from the Imperials earlier are emblems of the Imperial House.

"It's quiet. I can't even hear birdsong...It's probably because a monster integrated a pearl piece." (Shuten)

Now, where should I look for it?

I re-shoulder the Demon Slayer and look around again.

In this forest where tree trunks as thick as my arm span gather in crowds there is nothing that could be called a road. Stepping over the roots and bushes, I proceeded by the sunlight filtering through the foliage.

The reaction from the pearl piece is not far.

I think it is better to fight one-on-one with a monster as an opponent. That said, [Ah! There is a demon among the monsters! Let's fight it together!] It is said that you cannot be thwarted if you have a spear by your side. (TL: *in other words, he wants a comrade/companion I guess*)

For the time being, not including collateral damage, I'd rather not be disturbed.

Of course, I still need to raise my level, even though just by taking a single pearl piece my ability was enhanced from mid boss to a Las-Dun' (Last Dungeon) class creature.

Even if a small fry enemy around here has taken in a pearl piece, I can't imagine how strong it will be.

Meanwhile.

I proceed for awhile in response to the pearl piece's reaction.

"...Uwa." (Shuten)

Then, as if it were cut off, part of the ground was gouged out roughly. I think it is about 3 meters in radius. Even if three people were lined up end by end, still more could fit. The surrounding trees were also mown down as if by a powerful wind storm.

"...What a terrifying guy." (Shuten)

I can probably do it if I try. However, there is no trick comparable to an opponent capable of this.

"...the goddess-chan put it too lightly. It seems the difficulty of collecting the pearl pieces is higher than expected." (Shuten)

My battle experience was severely lacking, and honestly speaking this scene chilled me.

It is not enough to fear. However, without a doubt the scene before me was definitely overwhelming and especially eerie considering the culprit wasn't currently visible, and I can only think that I won't be able to reason with it.

"...It's no wonder nothing has been done yet." (Shuten)

Even so, I still have confidence in my ability to escape.

If I hold the Demon Slayer, I can restore my wonder and serenity. It is an indescribable feeling, the settling that comes from a demon holding the Demon Slayer.

Like this, I stepped into the gouged ground.

Hmm, It doesn't seem to have been cut out by some kind of magic. To put it this way, it seemed as though it was scooped out by a huge excavator...

It was at that time while I was deep in thought. The reaction from the pearl piece rapidly approached. I felt a chill behind me.

"Tsu_____!?"

As I jumped, the ground cracked at the same time. It is not an underground attack, but a crack from something crashing into the ground-- what on earth is

it?

While turning through the air I observed my surroundings.

It was there.

Definitely a monster. Behind where I was. A monster with four legs and huge jaws.

The silhouette is similar to the small fry monsters; however, with its huge size it's like a rocky mountain.

"Gyau...Crunch!"

"F*%&#*%" (Shuten)

Aiming at me who does not have a reliable foothold, the monster snaps its big mouth as it closes the distance. The strength of the front paws causes the ground to shake even with a single step of its whole body.

At this time I noticed exactly what it was.

"It's just the shape of a shovel dog...!" (Shuten)

The Demon Slayer was swung back to counterattack.

With one downward hit I intended to squarely cut off the fangs from the attacking jaws.

However.

"Gauu!"

"tch" (Shuten)

Perceiving the danger, it suddenly halted and leapt back. At its combination of the lightness from its original cute shape with its giant monster form, my eyes widen.

Oi oi, that's foul play.

But seeing how light it is on its feet, I can now understand how I did not even notice it until it was right behind me.

"...Without a doubt this guy has taken in a pearl piece." (Shuten)

"Gauu....!"

With its natural danger perception instincts it seems to be intimidated by me—no, the Large Kuchiinu is glaring at the Demon Slayer I carry. (TL: *or Dekakuchiinu. Thanks for the help from readers on this one! “Deka (Big) kuchi(mouth) inu (dog)” is the name for this monster*)

Without moving, it watched me sharply with bloodshot eyes.

Rather than insane, it is totally committed to burying the enemy before it...It's a feeling like that.

In any case, the Goddess nee-chan said the atmosphere would be crushing but that is probably a mistake.

“Guan!”

“Wait a sec” (Shuten)

After jumping to a thick tree branch, I was finally at the same height as the Large Kuchiinu.

Opening its mouth like a bridge, it looked upward and crashed its chin vigorously into the tree I was standing on. Although I was able to escape difficulty since I jumped to another tree just in time, it seems like it hitting the tree was considerably painful.

But this is certainly clear. The ground that was gouged previously, that is because of the jaw of Kuchiinu. Originally the shovel dog uses its protruding jaw as a shovel to dig up the ground and fill with food to last through winter hibernation. Their main hunting strategy is also to push animals up with their chin.

“...First, I need to take care of those jaws, right?” (Shuten)

But this kind of power. If I defeat this guy, the level-up looks delicious.

Also, Crane is currently not strong enough to stand up to these teeth. It would be game over after one hit.

I was really glad I could handle it first.

“And so, die quietly like an adult, shovel dog.” (Shuten)

The main team dispatched from the Imperial Academy agency to subdue the

unusual monster was in chaos due to the report from the failed advance party. As head of the subjugation force sent to investigate the unusual monster that appeared in Hana Flower Forest, Grendel the tenth seat of the magic librarians headed over 50 people waiting to enter the forest. Then from the scouts came the report that “a demon and Nine-tails appeared and the advance party was destroyed.”

Since when has the Hana Flower Forest contained such enemies?

It was supposed to be an abnormal species of huge Chiiinu they were looking for. That alone was troubling, but why is there a rare demon appearing in this area? More than that there is the frightful Nine-tails as an opponent that can take out an army alone.

They don't know why.

As if embodying the reactions of those who heard the report, the trees of the Hana Flower Forest shook tremendously. Even knowing that it was just the wind, it was still eerie.

“What do we do, tenth seat?” (Deputy)

“We do not know the fighting power of the Kuchiinu, but the reason why ours were annihilated was due to the fox-fire of the Nine-tails... Leave the Nine-tails to me. If it's a monster, there is no problem so long as you outnumber it.”
(Grendel)

“Understood.” (Deputy)

A man who is a deputy of the Imperial agency speaks to a young man wearing different clothing. The young man is Grendel “Glyph Scale,” the tenth seat of the magic librarians, and one of the strongest single martial artists the Empire boasts. As proof as the tenth seat he has the character X engraved on the collar of his black coat. However, he is not necessarily the weakest member of the ten. The strongest magic librarian who died during the incident two years ago with the demons was the second seat.

“Well, shall we go?” (Grendel)

Tying his long golden hair into a bundle so it doesn't blow about, he begins to walk quickly.

Trusting Grendel and his power as one of the strongest magic librarians, the agency members killed their fear and followed him into the Hana Flower Forest.

“But the monster and the Nine-tails is completely irregular...Did you mean that Nine-tails? The one sealed in Alfam?” (Grendel)

Behind the Deputy an officer reacted to Grendel’s words. Retrieving documents from his pocket he pulls up to their side.

If Grendel were to look at the documents out of the corner of his eye, it would show detailed information on state secrets, such as a map including the surrounding countries in addition to the strategy on the current mission the agency was on.

Just stopping at the area where the information was written, the officer raised his face and declared it to Grendel.

“Last night before dawn, a high power magical pulse was recorded coming from Wendell Plateau. But that seal is the multiple barrier created by Talos the sixth himself. So easily...I did not think it was a seal that could be solved in just 100 years.” (Officer)

Wendell Plateau. It is a spacious and comfortable plateau eastward of the Empire and past the Hana Flower Forest. There are almost no tall plants, while carnivores hide themselves in the sparse bushes. In such a place. A magical pulse was confirmed in the Wendell plateau.

The Nine-tails’ seal should have been in the Alfam Mountains. If the rock fell from the Alfam Ranges for some reason...it would not be amusing if someone crazy released it.

“...But there is complete evidence of this situation?” (Grendel)

“Yes. Be careful.” (Officer)

“Hmph...” (Grendel)

The true meaning behind Grendel’s fearless smile, his men had no idea.

Seeing such an expression made the deputy nervous. Surely, there are no words to describe such a feeling.

If the Nine-tails had truly reappeared, then the tragedy that occurred 100

years ago could possibly happen again. Grendel was still silent after listening to the information of the report, but without hesitation he ordered the advance of his subordinates.

To his deputy, Grendel smiled and declared, “No, wait. The only one to hunt a demon from 100 years ago should be a magic librarian. I think this is a good opportunity to prove the greatness of the current Imperial forces.” (Grendel)

“Y, Yes...!” (Deputy)

What a terrifying being.

The deputy thought so frantically. This is a magic librarian. This is the trump card of the empire.

The deputy was filled with both admiration and astonishment.

The threat of the monster and the assault of the demon somehow seemed more manageable with a magic librarian around. It was more than enough to make him think it was a daring approach.

In the dense forest, Grendel waded through the thorns and bushes and raised his foot over roots before he suddenly stopped.

“Tsu—” (Grendel)

“Tenth seat?” (Deputy)

“Get down, you guys.” (Grendel)

“What!?”

The words of Grendel came quickly just as flames began to attack from the sky.

The screaming blue fire that seemed like a direct hit was prevented without difficulty by Grendel standing in front.

“...It’s not peaceful. What is this sudden attack?” (Grendel)

“For a human being, I suppose you’ll do.” (Nine-tails)

“Ho...?” (Grendel)

A girl landed lightly on the ground.

She appeared to be about twenty years old. Young and feminine with such an appearance...no. Wrong. He understood that she was not human being, even without the tremendous pressure she wore. White triangular ears grow from the side of her head. Further evidence of her non-humanness descended to the ground; silver fox tails, nine of them.

“Are you a Nine-tails? The sealed Nine-tails?” (Grendel)

“You are...soldiers of the Empire.” (Nine-tails)

“Soldiers? No, there is no army in the Empire, only the proud ruling Imperial Academy.” (Grendel)

Is this Grendel’s terrible courage? There is an immense pressure like countless stabbing needles being emitted by this Nine-tails. In spite of this, Grendel retains his usual composure. Behind the Deputy, the people of the agency are already trembling and cannot even cry out.

“Heh. Well, we were heading to subjugate a Shovel dog. If it’s just a gigantic Kuchiinu, even just you guys will be fine?” (Grendel)

“W, what...?” (Deputy)

“Even without you here, I will be fine. Besides, don’t you think that standing without working hurts the reputation of the of the Imperial Academy agency?” (Grendel)

For an opponent like this, it is impossible for him to move freely while defending his men.

With Grendel, he was still nonchalant about defeating the Nine-tails.

As a famous Imperial magic librarian, his strength had already been determined.

However, it is an opponent he can most likely win against so long as he fights with all his strength. No, rather, there is almost no possibility he will lose.

But his subordinates are in the way. Turning his back, Grendel ordered his men.

What he really wanted to do was to quickly go and subdue the Kuchiinu.

“Go! That’s an order!” (Grendel)

“Yes!!” (Deputy)

As ordered, the Deputy slipped from the side of Grendel and headed towards the back.

However, the nine-tails didn’t miss this.

“Out of the way.” (Nine-tails)

“Do you think that I will let you?” (Grendel)

However, the fox-fire released by the nine-tails was quickly repelled by Grendel. The nine-tails eyebrows twitched at the intact Grendel’s speed.

“Now, shall we start?” (Grendel)

White, red, and green. Spheres of three colors that felt full of extraordinary magical power began dancing around Grendel.

To Grendel lifting the corners of his mouth, the Nine-tails furrowed her eyebrows.

Grendel of the Magic Librarians appeared! ▼

Chapter 13: Hana Flower Forest ③ [Solidly Strong Demon]

The members of the agency moved through the Hana Flower Forest according to the instructions of the Grendel. They were clad in extraordinary zeal, yet where did it come from?

The answer is that it was pride.

The intense pressure they felt when facing the Nine-tails had halted their movement, afterward spurred them as they ran away. They understood that they cannot leave everything to the strong Grendel. That is why only they are able to handle the abnormal organism with their own hands.

With that kind of feeling in their hearts, the members are proud.

“Deputy! A little while ago...was that really the Nine-tails sealed 100 years ago!? Wasn’t its pressure a little odd?!” (Imperial) The words were heard behind the running Deputy, from one of the 50 members he headed.

Looking back without stopping his feet, the Deputy responded.

“Aah...perhaps.” (Deputy)

It’s regretful, but that heavy pressure certainly belongs to the legendary Nine-tails.

The members of the agency, even in large numbers, cannot compete against such a disaster.

However, they are not weak, and are doing their best to find the Kuchiinu. Based on the Principality’s adventurer rankings, these gathered troops are similar to B class veterans.

That is the pride of the Empire, the Imperial Academy.

However, even those guys have found an opponent that could destroy them with a single touch of her sleeve. Though such a thing is an exception of

exceptions. Even this time, the role of the magic librarian Grendel was to monitor “just in case.” (TL: *so usually the Imperial squad can handle most things by itself*) If the situation is uncertain, and the enemy is unidentified, it becomes a reason to use the “magic librarians.” This was not counted as a fighting force for just an abnormal organism.

It is an irregular situation that often happens. (TL: *in other words, an uncommon, but not rare situation*) Grendel was the “force” to counteract the Nine-tails that appeared. Only two people were sent back to report to the Imperial Academy, while Grendel was going to hunt the Nine-tails by himself.

Compared to such a monster, his probable victory shows that the magic librarians are unquestionably monstrous themselves.

That was why the Deputy of the subjugation squad had moved on to another role. He was told to leave in order to subdue the abnormal organism. In the end, the only result was for him to carry out his duty without question.

“According to the report scroll, a massive magical pulse was confirmed at Wendell Plateau. Considering the timing, it cannot be a coincidence.”

“...Sometimes living organisms can be troublesome!”

“So we will clean up the unusual organism, and leave the Nine-tails to the tenth seat. After cleaning this up, a great history will be carved out for the Empire!”

“...Th, that’s right!”

In actuality, the Deputy is lacking confidence. It is a fact that they have no idea how strong the abnormal monster is, but when Grendel focused on the pressure of the Nine-tails he became bearish.

Running, running. Heading Southeast single-mindedly.

There are a few traces of the abnormal organism, though the territory of the monster should have been in the southeastern area of the Hana Flower Forest. He thought that it would be better to follow its trail of movement first of all.

However, there are too few signs of life.

Even mentioning how terrible the abnormal organism was, this was beyond

the threat level of one week. While being vigilant, the Deputy looked over the surroundings and proceeded through the forest with a jump.

“By the way Deputy! It seems there is another demon there too!” (Imperial)
“...Ah, alright.” (Deputy)

The voice from the men earlier spoke to the Deputy again.

Although he wanted the evaluation that he could easily converse at this running speed by his precious junior, he thought he should add a little harshness.

“However...!” (Deputy)

‘Is that even true?’ He thought.

Though it was tempting to sigh at the thought of some kind of wild demon, it would still be better if it was just because of the gigantic monster and not another demon. Perhaps it had been forgotten, but in addition to the Nine-tails and abnormal monster there is also currently in the Hana Flower Forest another demon.

“The abnormal monster changed this forest in one week. Compared to the Nine-tails the tenth seat is facing, we can afford a few extras. Especially if it is a demon.”

“Well, certainly. We the Empire are at the forefront of magic.”

Glancing at the squad member behind, who nods, and the deputy manager turned again forward.

The Imperial Hall of the Imperial Academy is simply a research facility that collects and studies intelligence for the Empire. Even in this place that is weak against the special attacks of demons, there is no complete defeat unless they stop. Because there was this way of thinking, the degree of danger from comparing the abnormal monster and Nine-tails was considerably low.

Anyway, it is the abnormal organism.

Those who destroy this forest pose a threat to the Empire. They do not know under what circumstances the monster appeared under, but it was necessary for the Imperial Academy to remove it. There was a reason: they had a duty to

fulfill.

“Gyaaaa...!!” (Kuchiinu)

“!!?” (Imperials)

Everyone from the squad noticed the roar.

It was low and eerie. However, it was strong enough so that they could hear it.

And at that moment, the earth shook sharply.

“Guwah!?” (Imperial A)

“What!!” (Imperial B)

“!!?” (Imperial C)

The severe earthquake that badly shook the whole forest caused the squad members to quickly fall to the ground. The noise of trembling was troubling, as slender branches broke one after another. And the flapping from the remaining birds hit their ears in an unpleasant cacophony.

“Wha, What...!?” (Imperials)

As they stopped and raised their heads, a violent wailing echoes throughout the surroundings.

“Gughaaooooo!!” (Kuchiinu)

“Chief Deputy!” (Imperial)

“Everyone Evacuate!!!” (Deputy)

Which of the cries was faster?

They were struck with a strong wind pressure as something like a rocky mountain blocked out the sky for a moment. Its speed of flight is much faster than what matches its bulk, causing the members to spread out in a hurry. At the same time the ground is dashed, the earth roared. *Crack, clang* and a fissure ran down along to where their feet were. In the ground pounded into a rounded crater, there are trees pitifully crushed.

“Gururu...!!” (Kuchiiinu)

Something swells, and a small mountain rises up. Its size is even longer than trees.

“Kuchi...inu...?” (Imperial)

Who was the owner of the trembling voice? The Deputy also agreed with him.

This must be the abnormal monster. There is no way he thought it was it even though the monster was said to have a big frame.

However, it certainly does seem like a Kuchiinu.

The distinctive sharp jaw like a shovel. *Grind*

With creepy eyes opened wide. A black nose and triangular ears. Without a doubt, except for its size and aura, it is a Kuchiinu.

“Whoa...?” (Imperial)

“!!?” (Deputy)

Clatter

The Deputy was surely in the Giant Kuchiinu’s line of sight. His instincts went to full alert.

Now that most monsters had left the forest, the terrifying carnivore was very hungry. Even the regular Kuchiinu, which is only half the size of a human, is a carnivorous beast that preys on humans in packs. This one had now become hug and hungry, and could not be overlooked. Without a doubt, it will attack. It glared at him. In that moment they made eye contact. However, the huge Kuchiinu diverted its gaze.

“Gughaaoooooooo!!” (Kuchiinu)

It roared. Then, it leapt forward swiftly as if its back legs were pushed vigorously.

“...We were ignored?” (Deputy)

“Deputy, please focus!” (Imperial)

“Oh, Oh sorry.” (Deputy)

Why. Why did it not attack? Doubts swirled within the Deputy.

The report said it was a danger to the Empire and would rampage in hunger. Looking at Even just looking at the desolate condition of this forest, anyone can tell.

Yet, for some reason the carnivorous Kuchiinu missed the human food right before its eyes.

“Gugaaoooo!!” (Kuchiinu)

“Let’s follow! Our mission is to kill the monster!” (Imperial) “Well, that’s right! Let’s go!” (Deputy)

As they started the chase, he suddenly realized. He had noticed.

“Deputy...?” (Imperial)

“...Hey, do you think the Kuchiinu flew so far over here by its own will?” (Deputy) Unintentionally, he spoke aloud to his men. While praying he was wrong.

“...N, no?” (Imperial)

However, the subordinates who realized the same thing will only turn blue in the face and shake their heads.

But if that Kuchiinu was –

“...If it had just leapt backwards, it would be impossible to create a crater on this large of a scale.” (Deputy) “It was blown away by someone?” (Imperial A)

“...No way.” (Imperial B)

They suddenly paled.

Right now, even just being hit by the aura of the monster dog was terrible. He wondered if there are even any monsters strong enough to launch a monster with such bulk into the air. He wondered if in the future they will come across such a monster that can cause this giant Kuchiinu to fly.

Since when had the Hana Flower Forest become such a hostile wilderness? He thought while cursing in his heart.

“L, Let’s go!” (Deputy)

“Y, Yes!” (Imperial)

The Kuchiinu who got up earlier now stared into the distance. The eyes of the Kuchiinu glaring further southeast almost seemed frightened. It was as if it had met some unknown monster, and was steeped in fear. Just like that time when they encountered the Nine-tails.

“There it is!! It’s a giant Kuchiinu!!”

“Hurry up!”

Below the Deputy, the squad continued to run Southeast.

It was there.

The Deputy noticed a shadow slipping through the trees, so he followed its movement with his eyes.

“Gugaaoooo!!” (Kuchiinu)

Along with the roar, it threw a big rock with its paw towards something like an illusion. The claws glinted in the sunlight before crashing back to the ground. From the blow there was a blast that cause the soil and trees to fly back. At that moment a small shadow leaped toward the other side of the Kuchiinu. The sharp jaw attacks the small shadow attacking in the air.

Is that the target of the Kuchiinu?

But, before the Deputy could chose to purse the monster.

“Guyaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!!” (Kuchiinu)

“!!?” (Imperial)

The smaller figure pulled an axe as large as its body from its back.

“What...an axe!?” (Deputy)

In a moment it collided with the giant jaw and the air was knocked out of it.

“Ku...!!?” (Kuchiinu)

The members of the squad were blown back from where they stood by the wind pressure. Among them, one was the Deputy who was staring at the battle.

“Our levels are...too different.” (Deputy)

The Kuchinnu screamed as blood clearly spouted out of its jaw. Yet, without a

large gap it still brought its foot down to crush the silhouette.

There is a *Don* obviously from when the legs explode against the ground. The shadow avoided the attack from the landing foot with a small step, then it jumped at the huge Kuchiinu. At a terrific speed equal to when it was knocked back, it attacked the neck of the Kuchiinu up to the handle of the blade.

“Gyooop!!?” (Kuchiinu)

The Kuchiinu could not even finish its scream as the smaller shadow rotated its axe and beat it down further. But, thinking the situation indisputable, the Kuchiinu instead bared its fangs and raised its energy at the one holding the axe.

“Tch...” (Shuten)

He thought he heard its tongue make such a noise. The smaller silhouette spun the axe and engaged the fangs like a skillful sportsman. As the metals crossed once again, they caused a sharp clashing sound.

Both sides were blown back by the force.

Zazaza (sfx for sliding or dashing) and the small shadow slid along the ground while the bleeding jaws of the Kuchiinu fell to the ground.

During the standoff, the smaller shadow slowly readied its axe.

“...The abnormal Kuchiinu species and the other are equal...!!” (Imperial) The Deputy returned to his senses with the voice of a squad member.

That’s right, this is not a case where he is deprived of his eyes in this fierce battle. Who on earth is fighting? He should verify it, and in certain cases, fight.

At that time he took one step forward.

“...Let’s do it.”

Instead, a chill runs down his spine.

Looking for the source, it is because of the terrible aura that spews out of the smaller shadow.

What is that? It’s like the edge of a blade with a cold bloodlust. It cannot be the Nine-tails, but it has a refined energy.

It's probably not directed at them, but even with that thought the Deputy cannot move.

At this distance he cannot verify the other person's appearance in detail. Still, at this distance he was stopped by the small shadow's bloodlust.

'What is going on with the Kuchiinu, who is receiving such a thing from the front?' When the Deputy looked over there instinctively, it was gnashing its teeth. Perhaps it was trying to turn tail and run away.

Suddenly, the great energy increased. An overwhelming aura that even surpasses the Nine-tails.

It is hard to claim to have any fighting spirit left after being hit by such a thing.

It as if he is "collecting."

Absorbing the power to its limit, condensing, and then loosing the mass of energy to try and hit the opponent before it.

Whether or not its feet tangled for a moment, obviously the smaller silhouette is faster.

"Fuu...!!" (Shuten)

"Guwaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!" (Kuchiinu)

Like cutting bamboo.

The axe swayed high in above before falling and bisecting the Kuchiinu from the front. It cut down through the hard fur, meat, and bone in one slash. The giant Kuchiinu sank with a tremendous earthquake, causing the dust to dance and hinder visibility for a minute.

"Did it succeed...?" (Deputy)

Fearfully, the Deputy advances to the battlefield. The squad also slowly followed him.

However, through the dust there is the glimpse of a black shadow. From the silhouette appears the figure of an Oni holding an axe.

The tremendous aura continued, and became stronger the closer they approached.

This kind of opponent faced the Kuchiinu with similar strength.

“... It’s a demon.” (Deputy)

“What...?” (Imperials)

Among the subordinates, they murmured that the “eyes” of their superiors will always discover something first. But if they returned their eyes to the dust quickly, two twisted black horns could certainly be seen.

Klunk, the sandal tapping the ground had some sort of magical coating, and there was a fluttering Navy blue Kinagaishi.

It was unique as well.

The Oni is a dangerous race of demons that specialize in close combat by an individual.

This demon that should be like others from its tribe carried a huge axe and wore beautiful Far Eastern clothing was now hunting the abnormal monster here.

At that blow of overwhelming power, his instinct lit up all danger signals.

“Ah, Aah...!” (Deputy)

His brain cried that he needed to flee.

That is on the scale of the Nine-tails...it was not an opponent they could stand against.

“.....Hmm?” (Shuten)

Its two red circles drilled into the Deputy.

At being noticed the Deputy screamed internally. His heart beat so hard it seemed like something was going to break.

Clearing his throat dry from the fear, the Deputy desperately overcame the crushing pressure and moved the corner of his mouth to cry out.

“Everyone, retreat!!!” (Deputy)

Turning around as he said so, he then ran to where he had come from and could no longer afford to worry what was behind them. Such a monster can

only be handled by a magic librarian. Hopefully, that person would finish the battle with the Nine-tails quickly and hunt this monster.

While wishing so, the people of the Imperial Academy, including the Deputy, ran back desperately to where the tenth seat was.

Chapter 14: Hana Flower Forest ④ [Magic Librarian of the Imperial Academy]

I watched the men from the Imperial Academy, who had been observing the battle, run away as the dust still settled.

It's almost like they saw a monster. It was a monster, I guess!

"...Useless." (Shuten)

For now all I can tell is that the bad guys have definitely escaped in haste.

I pick up the small stone rolling about my feet. As usual, the pearl piece was still dark.

"There must be some kind of scary appeal to the pearl pieces. I gave the one I found to Flair Reel-chan because she thought it was beautiful, even though it's dangerous!" (Shuten) However there's no one I can give a pearl piece to at the moment.

That's why I decided I'll try to take it into my body later, since I do not want any sharp pain at the moment. I mean, the first one jumped in without any questions, but these ones have showed no such thing besides turning dark. I appreciate the restraint, but there is also the matter of having to push through the pain by my own will.

I decide to put the pearl piece in my chest pocket. Just stay quiet in my pocket until the correct person arrives! You'll need to wait if you want to be in the bosom of a girl's kimono rather than mine!

Since it is too troublesome to deal with the corpse of the huge Kuchiinu, I left it behind.

But I digress.

From the moment I got the pearl piece, the pearl sensing radar inside me gave me another direction. That was the case at the Negri abandoned mine, it seems the mission is complete and the radar moves on even without having to put it in someone's body.

I am grateful that there is no need to put it in a body. Well, the next direction is surprising.

“This way, Northwest. Wasn’t that where the Nine-tails was headed...Hmm?” (Shuten) Wasn’t it for someone from the Empire?

Woah, I don’t want to go. I super don’t want to go. It’s true that the Empire is used to being surrounded by strong demons, but it shouldn’t be normal for people to be stronger than monsters from the last dungeon. Normally, the power class of one from the last dungeon in the Makai Underground Empire wouldn’t be pressed back so much by a commonly spawning monster.

I’m disgusted.

“I wonder what would happen if a magical librarian got one of the pearl pieces. Uhhh, I don’t want to think about it.” (Shuten) But there is no doubt that the pearl piece is in the direction of the Empire. And the recovery is my job, unfortunately. I do not want to corrupt the balance of power.

It would be interesting if I could give the pearl pieces to Crane-kun and his friends, but I’m scared they might disintegrate if I do it wrong. Normally.

I became melancholy at the thought that there are 12 remaining pieces.

“Well, I guess I have to go?” (Shuten)

I re-shoulder the Demon Slayer, and as soon as I move I suddenly notice my stomach was empty.

“...I thought that there was no food since I entered this forest, but I was wrong. It’s right in front of me.” (Shuten) I wonder why I didn’t notice earlier this huge thing lying before me was simply meat.

I decided to head to the Empire after I grilled this giant Kuchiinu I killed, so I scraped some meat from it with the Demon Slayer. After dragging some chest meat over and letting the blood drain out, I quickly put it to roast over the fire.

Let’s bake it carefully and then eat.

“...Disgusting.” (Shuten)

The smell is too strong, and I lost my appetite. That’s not something I want to put in my stomach. I gave up on the meat. It is impossible to eat, it seems the

meat of a carnivorous monster is not good.

While thinking such a thing, I start walking Northwest.

The forest is wide, and I admire that a single tier dungeon can boast the largest area. Planar dungeons that you can get easily lost in like the Hana Flower Forest do not exist in Grimoire Lancer. (TL: *he probably means that either the forest isn't found in the first game, or the single-level dungeons in the game overall are not easy to get lost in*) Should a map be created it would probably be at least a 15 page book.

“Oh, the rock.” (Shuten)

As I continued, I found an unusual rock formation in the woods.

At the end of the Hana Flower Forest, on the North end, is a warped upright rock. The exits of this dungeon are separated from the outside, by the rock in the Northwest and in the by a river Southeast.

“On the other side of this rock is the Empire!” (Shuten)

While stroking the rock I indulge in emotion.

So I walk all along the rock wall.

I am melancholic to go to the Empire, but I am also optimistic that I will manage somehow as long as I don't bite off more than I can chew.

The Empire.

In the landscape of Grimoire Lancer II, the number of human countries in the world is four. The four include the Kingdom, the Professor Country, the Principality, and the Empire. There was also the Republic, but two years before II it had been completely absorbed by the Empire. As such, the other three countries in a sense of crisis created a tripartite alliance, and strengthened their national defenses by sharing the Adventurers Association originating from the Principality.

Well, though it means that only one country is the hub compared to the Empire, in reality there is a power imbalance. Even so, the Empire is a strong country.

The Kingdom's “Holy Dragon Knights.”

The Professor Country's "Crusaders Cross Legion."

And the "Adventurers Association of Braves" in the Principality.

With each country having an organization like this, only the Imperial Academy is different. In the world of Grimoire Lancer the use of magic is totally different depending on the country. However, it is common in most countries to manipulate magical particles drifting throughout the world through voiced instructions called "casting" or "chanting."

But the Empire is different. Strictly speaking, a "magic librarian" is different.

Drawing out a powerful "energy body" from another space referred to as "variation phases (異相)," magical power is generated with greater ferocity intact.

The ability to enable connection with "variation phases." Vast magical power. The mental strength needed to reinforce a spiritual energy body. Only those who possess these three talents have the qualifications needed to become a magic librarian, and they can still reach greater heights despite being human.

Because they are always have the ability to manipulate a powerful energy body and own the magic spell books known as Grimoires, they are known as magic librarians.

"...well, the point is that they are a dangerous enemy for me now who can both wield weapons and manipulate magic intrinsically." (Shuten) ...by the way.

The people who ran away earlier should have been people who belonged to the Imperial Academy. Had they been the troops sent to subjugate the Kuchiinu...they were supposed to be from the agency, but maybe that's not it?

Somehow the pieces began to fall into place.

I sighed in spite of myself. Since magic librarians are also people from the Empire, they will not excuse any demons. If there is only one it's possible, but three or four people...especially if all ten are gathered together then I will probably be instantly evaporated. Though I don't remember too much about those guys.

If there is more than one I will withdraw, but if it's just one person it might be

good to test my current skills. I will be able to pull out my full power, and it is good to reduce the number of dangerous opponents when the opportunity arises, though more than anything...I cannot meet that person.

“...What should I do if it’s Grendel?” (Shuten)

The only problem is Grendel the tenth seat. Obviously, because he is the final companion who joins the hero Crane’s party later on.

I remember when the Imperial magic librarian joined the party, and I thought the rise in difficulty was unusual. Then when I opened the status screen, he was totally higher in level than even the protagonist. Even though everyone else is not yet level 35, he alone is level 48! He’s truly a magic librarian of the Empire... Well, you catch up while fighting together. Since only one person has a high level and a wide range of experience, it is difficult to just raise his level.

Also, after the main story-line in the game you get the opportunity to fight with the other magic librarians, and my overwhelming loss was a good memory.

“Well, at that time, what then?” (Shuten)

All magic librarians are the same strength as Makai Underground Empire last dungeon class...so I probably won’t die if I do my best.

I don’t think it’s a far-fetched encounter, considering the fact that the people from the Imperial Academy had escaped during the fight earlier, so it may not be surprising that they returned to call on the magic librarian. Initially, only one magic librarian would be dispatched by the agency as part of the advance group to preside over the battle with the Kuchiinu.

“It seems likely.” (Shuten)

I’ll do this much! I wonder if I can escape through talking. Yeah, let’s try that.

After I came to the northern end of the dungeon, I head west. I move quickly while carrying the Demon Slayer.

That reminds of something urgent!

“...Wasn’t that Nine-tails-chan also headed towards the Empire? I don’t know about 100 years ago, but if she opposes the magic librarians doesn’t that put her in a bad situation?” (Shuten) However, between the weakest magic librarian

Grendel and a Nine-tails sealed for 100 years, which one would win?

There's no way the one sealed a hundred years ago would win, right?

For example, if Grendel is charmed then it'll be a single shot...or maybe not? Basically, magic librarians are granted magic that resists the magic of certain monster types.

If so they can compete on the same soil ...I do not know because I have not seen the Nine-tailed girl fight seriously, so— At that moment, a giant rock from the wall formation hits the ground in front of me with a loud sound. Several large rock fragments were smashed to pieces on the ground, and I can't help but think something is wrong. I guess they were blown away.

“...Ah— well, the magic librarian is this strong?” (Shuten)

The Nine-tailed girl who was struck by the rocks fell heavily to the ground according to law of gravity. Thinking about it calmly, this Nine-tails is a mid-game boss who fights the hero Crane that broke her 100 year seal. Well, they didn't have a magic librarian at the time.

I grabbed the Nine-tailed girl about to bash her face on the ground and rolled for a bit.

“...Hmmm, it's the demon mentioned in the report. It seems to be a few steps stronger than the Nine-tails here.” (Grendel) “Hey there magic librarian. No way, as I feared, Grendel-san was the one among those here.” (Shuten) “Huh, you know me?” (Grendel)

As I slowly walked from the trees, it seemed like he was a magic librarian with a cautious atmosphere.

This was the Grendel I had imagined just a little while ago. The tenth seat. Although it is the last seat, that doesn't mean it is ordered according to ability. The reason why he is called the weakest magic librarian is purely because Grendel in front of me is not as strong in combat capability.

However, even the weakest magic librarian is comparable to a monster from the last dungeon of the Makai Underground Empire.

“It's too bad, but no demon is allowed to be brought into the Empire. So shall

I let you die along with that Nine-tails there?" (Grendel) "Well, sorry, but no thanks." (Shuten)

Grendel barely reacts, with a face chiseled from stone. While brushing aside his clean blonde hair, he half-turned towards me.

"Indeed, it seems to be above the Nine-tails, but...I am the wrong person to go against. I will crush you thoroughly." (Grendel) "I would also like to be excused from that." (Shuten)

Catching a terrible glimpse behind me of the Nine-tailed girl, her borrowed clothes have turned to rags. Are only demons treated this way? No, it might have been because the Nine-tails instigated the fight...Even so, her side had been gouged out, her tails were burnt and ears tattered, and blood dripped from her legs...If the target had not changed to me, she would be dead.

"Stop...it..." (Nine-tails)

"Speak clearly." (Shuten)

"You...!!" (Nine-tails)

I do not understand what you are saying. It is not some scene where I'm dashing to protect a girl's appearance here. Or it would be a little more like, "Shuten-kun...for me...(dazed by my charm)" is what it looks like.

He didn't introduce himself. Is my fantasy unachievable?

"I will not give you time to look away!" (Grendel)

"I didn't intend to do so from the beginning." (Shuten)

Grendel released three kinds of spheres, white, green, and red.

I knew their three roles in the game.

White disables all attacks. Green is power amplification. And red, it's dangerous if it hits you.

"Let's go!"

"Well then!"

Shaking from left to right, the red sphere excitedly attacked me. That is, when the moment it hits you, a bomb attack that ignores defense. He really is a

dangerous guy.

In response, I slam the Demon Slayer into the ground. The earth rises in a wave to strike Grendel. In the meanwhile, I avoided the flying red ball.

“Hmph.” (Grendel)

My earth wave went in a straight line. Grendel held up his black gloved hands and punched it hard. At the same time, his green sphere resonated and caused his body to glow.

Explosion. The waves of earth were shattered by his fist.

Beyond the flying, scattered soil Grendel shows a fearless smile.

“Do you still want to fight?” (Grendel)

Why not?

“...Sorry, I haven’t done anything yet.” (Shuten)

“Mmm...really? In that case I will destroy everything until I break your confidence. Since I got a good reaction, I thought it was a real attack.” (Grendel)
However, as long as Grendel has that green sphere, his attack power will continue to rise.

Also, the red sphere will continue to fly at me with attacks. They are not an autonomously mobile, but rather Grendel manipulates each one individually. It is an amazing thing, but it is also a weak point.

“Well then.” (Shuten)

“With that giant thing, of course it’ll be battle of close proximity?” (Grendel)
Driving into the ground and crouching low almost to my chest, I swung the Demon Slayer. I was confident in its speed. However, Grendel received it with a glove.

“D*#n.” (Shuten)

“Hmm...!” (Grendel)

Oioioioi, isn’t his power too strong?

With pure antagonistic force, Grendel’s feet are driven into the ground. I thought I could push him further, but at the same time as the green sphere

glowed, from behind— “Oops.”

An explosion. The red sphere exploded into my right shoulder, and the sharp sensation rapidly transformed into pain.

...It's good I had this Kinagaishi.

I can sense that even this amount of damage had been reduced. That was really dangerous.

“Hmm, I thought that was a fancy outfit for a demon...but it seems that it is not just for appearance.” (Grendel) “Your men saw through that at a glance.” (Shuten)

“Thanks, but I'm not good at that kind of thing.” (Grendel)

“That's good.” (Shuten)

Grendel casually stretched his wrists.

I hope that speed of the Demon Slayer will not dull because my right shoulder was wounded.

“Now then, shall I start with this?” (Grendel)

In an instant, Grendel arrived in front of me. His speed is comparable to mine earlier.

Just before his glove was about to hit my face, I jumped back while swinging the Demon Slayer.

He avoided it by moving to the side, and then Grendel crouched and instantly began to accelerate. Crap, not only attack is increased but also speed.

“That's the difference in capability. That big axe is not suitable for a martial artist as an opponent.”

“Heh, then allow me!”

“!!?”

Slamming the axe into the ground, he then countered with his attack. The quaking earth hesitated momentarily as both sides met, then quieted— And behind the scenes, spinning over in a hurry, the red sphere pierced through the earth.

“You avoided it.” (Grendel)

“That’s it...!” (Shuten)

“But.” (Grendel)

He slams his fists together and muttered with a ferocious smile. What is with that expression?

“All three of my spheres are meant to be together.” (Grendel) “!!?” (Shuten)

Hey, where did the white sphere from earlier go!? The white sphere was now aiming for the right side of my body.

I avoided it, then responded to the red sphere approaching with my Demon Slayer.

“You look away too much.” (Grendel)

“Crap...!!” (Shuten)

If I am too dependent on the Demon Slayer then it might as well be a stick...!

My distraction by the sphere created a gap of opportunity, which Grendel rushed into before I realized. The flat of his palm jabbed forward.

It’s aiming for my heart—I must avoid it!...!?

I try to avoid it by twisting my body, but it is already too late.

The palm released from Grendel’s right side hit the left of my chest strongly, knocking me into the air.

That-is—

It hurt. It felt like his palm shoved something into my chest.

“Ah...Gah...!?” (Shuten)

Something is causing my whole body to hurt.

Cold sweat poured out of my entire body.

“Mu?” (*sfx for annoyance, though it also seems confused*) (Grendel)

“Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhh!!!!!!!!!!!!” (Shuten)

What is this.

It must be what I put in my pocket a little while ago.

I absorbed the pearl piece.

Chapter 15: Hana Flower Forest ⑤ [VS Tenth Seat Grendel]

I changed the “Phantom phase skills” to “Divine Phenomenon phase skills,” as it seems to be a better translation and also captures the idea of power I think the Empire would approve of. On another note, I sure wish I knew the Nine-tails’ name for this chapter!

=====

It’s a monster in the shape of a man.

This was the impression of the Nine-tails as she looked at the person who had countered her fox fire and seemed to become more powerful over time with his explosive attacks.

She had never seen such a human being that could overwhelm the power of her, a nine-tails, by his own power without some kind of drug or support.

Such a human did not exist in the Empire a hundred years ago.

“Imperial...Academy...!!!” (Nine-tails)

“Oh? Since you were sealed 100 years ago why do you know of the existence of the Imperial Academy?” (Grendel) “It doesn’t matter...!!” (Nine-tails)

Manipulating her nine tails, she grappled with Grendel’s high speed. Her impatience grew and she became more irritated at the calm expression of the man in front of her.

“It’s a good fighting technique...but you cannot match my movements.” (Grendel) “Ga...!?”

The base of his palm.

The power of the striking blow was so intense that she wondered if her stomach had flipped over.

She thought rapidly while she flew back in the air from Grendel, momentarily

overpowered by the instantaneous Force. (TL: *It calls it “G” like for gravitational force*)

It was at that time that she was blown away and felled many trees, finally stopping moving after hitting a larger tree.

“Gua...” (Nine-tails)

“This is no vacation.” (Grendel)

“Ga!?” (Nine-tails)

Her ribs were in intense pain. The red spheres rushed in and bombarded her without mercy, exploding. Instantly, Grendel appeared in front of her. As he swung his fist, alarm bells rang in her head, and she desperately twisted her neck away. From that side, Grendel pierced the big trees behind her.

“Oh...!!” (Nine-tails)

“You managed to avoid it?” (Grendel)

There was a hot pain where it had grazed her left ear. But there was no time to worry about it. Taking a great leap to gain distance, she stared at the three spheres that wandered around him.

“Urgh...” (Nine-tails)

She could not suppress the unpleasant nausea from the stomach-churning experience earlier, from being exploded backwards by his palm. *Stagger* While still unsteady on her feet, she tuned in her five senses to determine the enemy's next movements.

As the three spheres floated fluidly around him, Grendel stretched his hands and began rolling his shoulders to loosen any tension. However, even though Grendel was in a state of preparedness, she had lost any confidence at beating him. With his casual attitude of battle preparation, she sorrowed at the imminent prospect of defeat.

“Hmm. Do you still want to fight? Even counting the number of your tails is tedious and it will be easier for me if you just run away.” (Grendel) “That is...an extremely cheap provocation...” (Nine-tails)

“Provocation is meaningless against an opponent covered in full-body

wounds. This is merely goodwill. I cannot allow a demon into the Empire. That's why I fight. If you leave then that reason is gone." (Grendel) "Don't joke around...A hundred years ago such a habit would be a foolish mess." (Nine-tails) "I don't about 100 years ago, but I would guess you are the reason for such a mess?" (Grendel) *Heh (sfx for basically knowing smirk)* In spite of things, a smile escaped her. It was neither a fun nor joyful expression. It was a smile of self-disdain. It was a smile of self-destruction. It's a complete mockery of herself who has been alone for a hundred years.

Grendel frowned dubiously at the Nine-tails who wore such a relaxed facial expression.

Perhaps there is no chance of victory. However, the emotions of this Nine-tails are not so cheap that the Empire can pull them out so easily.

Breathing out quietly, she closed her eyes.

"Even so, there is a place I must go." (Nine-tails)

"Is that so?" (Grendel)

Opening up her eyes, her mind soon cleared.

She wasn't going to back down no matter how ragged she became.

"If...you will not leave, then there will be no mercy." (Grendel) "!!?" (Nine-tails)

The atmosphere of Grendel changed.

The momentum of the three spheres circling round and round continued to increase.

Meanwhile the orbits gradually decreased, and at the moment they were on the verge of touching Grendel – "[Great Three Elements]" (Grendel)

"Ku!!?" (Nine-tails) *(sfx for a silent/muttered curse)* White energy enveloped Grendel, and green particles began to scatter around, causing both gloves to glow brightly.

"What is this...!?" (Nine-tails)

"My Divine Phenomenon phase skills. It amplifies my active abilities,

invalidates all opponents' attacks, and creates multiple explosions....Now, how many seconds can you last—?" (Grendel) "Gulp...Fox fire!" (Nine-tails)

"—Let's see you try." (Grendel)

Divine Phenomenon phase skills. The magic of magical librarians.

Unfortunately, Nine-tails was unable to understand this unknown Imperial magic that otherwise would have been known if Shuten was there.

There was no expectation of success.

Perceiving the danger the nine-tails leapt back with some distance and from above cast down fox fire. However, Grendel simply received all the naïve attacks.

"What!?" (Nine-tails)

"It invalidates all attacks—" (Grendel)

At the same time the fireball was erased he was in an amplified state with [Green], and moved at a speed indeterminable to the Nine-tails. She thought it would be a bad idea to prevent Grendel's attack with her tail, as his fist literally exploded.

"—Didn't I tell you?" (Grendel)

"Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!" (Nine-tails)

The Nine-tails, who had been forced to receive a direct frontal explosion, was blown into the sky. As she heavily hit the rock wall she momentarily lost consciousness, and her mind was dyed pure white.

"Kaha...!?" (Nine-tails)

As the impact finished, a crater was created and cracks ran across the rock wall as stone pieces fell to the ground. Succumbing to gravity, Nine-tails began to slide to the ground.

This...Impossible. If she took one more hit, she would die.

Even after seeing such a thing as the Divine Phenomenon and defeat seemed inevitable, perhaps if she still had some spirit left then there might have been a way to fight. But there was no use.

It was the scene of defeat, as both her sight and hearing was hazy and unrecognizable. There was too much of a difference in battle prowess.

She was still bleeding, but there was no space to worry about such a thing. If she fell to the ground like this, then she will be beaten by one blow and it will be The End.

Trembling, her body leaned forward. Falling head first, the ground came into sight— *Posu~ (from what I can tell, the sfx for being caught)* Eh?

There was something warm, like the feeling of being held. Her nose responded with a sniff to the smell that had been smelt recently.

There was no impact. In her dimming vision, the figure of someone holding her appeared.

Two twisting black horns.

Um, it was that strange man who was embarrassing.

He said nothing at all, and slowly leaning her against the rock wall, he turned his face towards the forest. Beyond his gaze stood the magic librarian, and the three spheres drifting around him. It seemed he had yet to release that ridiculous magic. The demon was motivated. (TL: *You could at least remember his name!*)

The magic librarian and Oni confronted each other.

Why did he appear in such a place? Even though he supposedly had an errand in the Hana Flower Forest, why was he in here in such an obviously dangerous place?

Given the information she had and her personal logic, this was ridiculous. He shouldn't bother himself and die in such a place.

"Stop...It's not an opponent for a demon like you. Run away...!" (Nine-tails)
Unlike her who had lived a long time even being sealed for 100 years alone, he was young. The youth in front of her was too young to die. To her words that had such a thought in mind, for a moment the Oni turned around towards her.

"I don't know what you're talking about though?" (Shuten)

The crazy man talked in a joking manner as usual.

“You will die...!?” (Nine-tails)

But she could not stop him even though she tried because of the tremendous damage she had taken.

In the next moment the battle between Grendel and the Oni began.

However, unlike the terrible death the Nine-tails had imagined, even closing her eyes for a moment to escape reality, the demon moved at a godly speed, and wielded the Demon Slayer well. Beyond that, Grendel was forced to fight back with his skills using the performance of the red and green spheres. The flying murderous lights were skillfully maneuvered. Without any margin for error in the attacks, the Nine-tails noticed a line of sweat hovering on Grendel’s cheeks.

What on earth is that demon?

She didn’t think he was a regular demon, but clearly shown in this situation he seems to be even stronger than her. She was frustrated, and there is no other word capable of understanding her feelings better than that. In what world is there a young demon stronger than a nine-tails?

Perhaps he will be able to beat Grendel. For a moment a faint hope arises in her, but naturally it will not go so well. Grendel still carries the benefits of the Divine Phenomenon Phase skill, even if the demon is wielding the Demon Slayer.

Retaliating, he swung downwards, sideways, and upwards, and the demon who naturally used such a big weapon somehow managed to cut out excess movements and keep his opponent no closer than necessary.

However, Grendel used the maneuvers of his spheres successfully, and rather than waiting for a chance, created an opportunity. He then slipped in and focused on his strike.

He had become accustomed to the battle.

“...!”

She ground her teeth.

The battle before her eyes was held because she had not been able to defeat

the magic librarian. Since she herself was strong, then she had never been forced to admit defeat to anyone else. Filled with emptiness and regret, her teeth ached. Even in this woeful state.

Just looking at this battle without excess emotions, she realized then that demon had just received a blow that had one-shot her.

“!!”

She was trying to get up but she could not move. Her back was completely paralyzed. It would heal after awhile, but right now she could not go to help. And even if she were to at least support with her fire, it would quickly be dissipated by the wind pressure from their battle.

‘What a pathetic creature’ She thought.

Because of her own blunder, others were close to death and would be killed right in front of her while she was in a helpless situation, unable to do anything.

Her right arm fell back down without energy. In silence she looked at the ground, and the right hand which should have no feeling grasped the soil firmly.

Just this much, is regrettable.

“...Do not die...demon...” (Nine-tails)

At least, those were her thoughts. Though when it came out of her mouth the words surprised her. Isn’t it pathetic to rely on someone with greater potential and only give them words of encouragement when she was in such a pitiful state?

But this desire was also empty words, and the palm of Grendel strongly hit the demon’s chest.

“Urgh!!” Her facial expression twisted. For this stranger, because she could not move herself, he would die in front of her.

But at that moment, the situation changed.

“Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhh!!” (Shuten)

It was too cruel of an expression to say it was merely a cry to endure pain. Awakening out of his body was an energy steps higher than before.

To the too intense intimidation that was felt, Grendel took a bewildered step back and looked on.

ROAR

In a mighty roar, the earth around him cracked. The aura that spewed from him was so strong that the forest trees fluttered as if in a noisy wind.

“...Hey, were you playing around until now?” (Grendel)

“Fushuu...!” (*sfx for something cooling down TL shrugs*) Grendel shrugs, but the expression did not hide his frustration. Wrinkling his forehead and mouth, he wiped off some cold sweat.

To an extent, the demon was exuding an unusual feeling.

“!!?”

Just when she thought that he had glared at Grendel, he moved.

After feeling the unfathomable something Grendel’s instinct to jump back was correct. At such a speed to think he had disappeared, the earth where Grendel had just been standing now had an axe in the ground.

Grendel’s vision was suddenly eclipsed by all the particles flying about.

This was dangerous. His quick judgment thought so.

“[Great Three Elements]” (Grendel)

Earlier, this was the time that the nine-tails had succumbed to defeat.

He scattered green particles and white energy enveloped him. His two fists were covered in red. With fists holding flame like weapons, he attempted to throw the fire towards the Oni as dust storms erupted from each of the sudden blows, and then the demon again appeared before his eyes.

“Wha...?” (Grendel)

The only thing the Nine-tails saw was the demon with the giant axe appear immediately in front of Grendel. Once the dust storm rose it seemed like Grendel’s reaction speed had increased due to the green particles, and his explosions had increased to defend but nothing else could be seen.

“Gyaaaaa!!” (Grendel)

It was Grendel who was flung away.

Thrown along the ground with a wave of soil, his attack invalidation was broken. Following the sound of dragging and crashing, there were red marks dotting the ground.

It was blood that flowed from the man who was supposed to be invincible. If something were to be noticed that was wrong, it was that blood dripped from both of Grendel's hands as he used them to stand up.

Shouldn't the invalidation field apply to the fists clad in red? But, why did the demon attack using that violent weapon that causes sparks to fly at the moment of contact? Is such a thing possible through use of a skill? (TL: *In other words, she doesn't really understand Grendel's ability or Shuten's power*)

Before these questions could be answered, Grendel's facial expression quickly turned pale.

"!!?"

At the moment when she looked up, the demon appeared in the sky, swinging the giant axe downward in a blur of potential energy.

"Gyaaaaa!!" (Shuten)

Seeing that it would be foolish to continue to block attacks with his fist, Grendel created another white invalidation aura on his leg and released a roundhouse kick. The clash of "force" was intense. The situation that caused sparks and magic to scatter did not last long.

Nine-tails finally understood the gimmick of Grendel's skill...at least of the "white sphere" was understood. The potential and kinetic energy focused on the falling blade of the axe right now was being absorbed.

All kinds of things including demonic and thermal energy are absorbed and extinguished by that [White] magic, just like the fox fire earlier.

But.

The Nine-tails was convinced that the demon had finally made it through the [White] and inflicted damage on Grendel.

He did not use any transcendental skill.

It was simply a matter of hitting with an energy too tremendous to be absorbed.

“Gu, Aaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhh!!”

With a loud noise, a crack appeared in the white energy surrounding Grendel.

The demon merely swung the axe in conjunction with the fall. With only that action, the attack was stronger than the [White] magic that absorbed so much fox-fire.

With both feet embedded into the ground, Grendel screamed as flesh and bone was crushed.

However, in the next moment, the demon manually released his attack and again swung the large axe with both hands.

“Huh!?” (Grendel)

Crackle and with a sound the [White] magic was completely crushed, and Grendel was blown sideways. Under the mass of power three of the large trees bent and broke, then finally the fourth tree cracked and he stayed.

Nine-tails, who had been watching the situation, was stunned.

Grendel, too, before he knew what had happened had his “Divine Phenomenon Phase skills” broken, leaving him shocked for a moment.

Then.

With fatigued feet and both hands bleeding, Grendel glanced at his scraped-up appearance and immediately sighed as he realized his disadvantage.

“This is...Terrible...I will escape for now.” (Grendel)

“Ah...!” (Nine-tails)

“...There is no need to chase after, right?” (Shuten)

It was the Nine-tails who raised her voice to stop him, but it was arrogant of her to want to stop that person. This was a natural thought from the one who was saved.

“...Thank you. I was saved.” (Nine-tails)

More than that.

To the young man who thoroughly overwhelmed Grendel, she had to give her thanks. She never thought he was that strong, but the reason for her relief was the fact that he did not die.

As soon as she felt relieved, her fingers moved more easily.

“...I cannot move once the battle is over...Really, I am...pathetic...!” (Shuten)
But that young man is immersed in frustration.

Then there was the hollow sound of something falling.

“Eh!”

As she watched the young demon, the Demon Slayer fell to the ground, and his swaying figure was likely to collapse at any moment.

She rushed over there to support him, though he was heavy, being a full-grown man. Thinking of the person who helped her, she would rather bear the damage she received rather than let him fall down here.

“Woah there” (Nine-tails)

“...” (Shuten)

“His breathing...is...Did he fall asleep?” (Nine-tails)

Her face involuntarily broadened into a smile, but in the next moment she caught herself.

“But...the exhaustion of magical power is unusual.” (Nine-tails) His condition is likely to worsen. His breath is shallow, and there is a lot of sweat.

“Hey! ...After all it was impossible to do anything earlier you know!? This isn’t a joke (冗談じゃないってば)...somewhere...a place to rest...!” (Nine-tails) As she looked around while supporting the Oni, she found something that looked like a hole in the rocky formation. With a sigh, the nine-tails muttered under her breath.

“...Just this one time.” (Nine-tails)

She deftly placed him on her nine tails. A fox’s tail that’s like being wrapped in a bed. For the fox-like demons, including the Nine-tails, there is a special

meaning to let someone touch her tail.

This was only possible because he was currently unconscious.

Paying attention to her unsteady feet, she walked down the stone wall. In order to keep the demon from falling she held him carefully with her tails. She could not afford to worry about her own blood that dripped onto the ground. His condition was terrible, and his body battered.

With lacerations on his right shoulder and bruised ribs. She brought the demon to a rocky place and laid the Oni on the cool ground.

Beyond that, both her arms were strained from the heavy load, and she had torn up her own clothes to wrap bandages. Well, actually the clothes had been stripped off of the some members of the Imperial Academy, but she thought she had done a good job wrapping even if it was messy.

Afterwards, paying attention to the wounds he had, she considered going to find medicinal herbs. But the medicinal herbs that cure magic power depletion only grow in the south.

It would be nice if they were lucky enough to meet a passing merchant, but she cannot imagine anyone who would pass through this forest after hearing such a loud noise.

Occasionally the youth gave a moan from his pain.

“...If it’s magic, I still have some.” (Nine-tails)

Suddenly the demon gave in.

Although it wasn’t said so at the time, she was protected by him. He’s a strange guy.

“...I will repay the favor.” (Nine-tails)

Her hand touched his chest.

What she was doing was a blood contract. (TL: *blood, as in kindred or family*) “If I tell him it was to save his life, then he will be convinced.” (Nine-tails) By creating a connection between him and the kin of the nine-tails, then she will be able to immediately supply magical power and save his life.

And so.

She brought her face closer to his face slowly.

The Nine-tails thought he looked better when he wasn't talking, and she wanted to touch his horns a little bit.

“...Ei~”

She pressed her small lips against his mouth.

She would soon regret this action.

Chapter 16: Hollow in the Rocks [A Contract, or Something More?]

Suddenly, the feeling of consciousness, like emerging from the deep sea, enveloped my body.

Go up, go up. Towards the beautiful shining light of the sun. Continue, continue. At that moment I thought I had come to the surface of the water.

My eyes opened.

Where on earth am I?

The ceiling was made of rough rocks. The gathered sunset was a bit dazzling. However, I didn't hate it and instead I wondered at the orange sunlight.

"...Here is?" (Shuten)

When I tried to raise my body I felt an awful pain. However, I feel that my body is much lighter than before.

What had I been doing until now?

...Oh yeah. During the battle with Grendel, the pearl piece was pushed into my chest, so that dangerous pain...did I rashly fight Grendel while in a haze?

I am relieved that I didn't kill Grendel, but more than that, I had come to realize the full horror of the Divine Phenomenon Phase skills through first-hand experience.

What is it?

It's supposed to be the cheat only the Empire manages. And he is supposedly the weakest or the fool of the magical librarians.

No, it is thanks to the second pearl piece that I managed to defeat him. However, I do not want to absorb any more if possible. I'm scared of the pieces. It's probably become a slight trauma.

"...After that, I collapsed..." (Shuten)

So why am I in this rocky place?

As I thought about it, I noticed that among the rocks I was surrounded by fluffy bedding.

With a glance I looked to the side, and there was the Nine-tails, who saw me looking and her face turned red. The fox demon was even more tattered than I am. So then, was I asleep? Is this her tail?

Uwa I'm very sorry. What a good shampoo you are using?

"...Please get up if you are awake." (Nine-tails) "I'm still asleep." (Shuten)

"Go." (Nine-tails)

"Uissu." (Shuten) (*sfx for soft complaint*) Since it still hurt to move my body, I got off her tail slowly. Lightly touching my right shoulder to check the condition of my wound, it seemed like it had been wrapped in cloth.

"Ah, I bothered you for this." (Shuten) (あ、わざわざ手当なんてしてくれたの) "W, what? Is it a nuisance?" (Nine-tails)

"No, thank you. I didn't think you would take me here." (Shuten) "It's a natural response from someone who has been helped." (Nine-tails) Has been helped, hey. I happened to pass by and saw Grendel, so I simply faced him to add tension to the story of the game, though that cannot be said out loud.

I guess on the surface it seemed like I helped her...No, even if it wasn't coincidence, would you please accept my gratitude? There certainly would be no harm.

"...Hm?" (Shuten)

"!!?" (Nine-tails)

Somehow, my body felt strange.

However, what is even stranger is the Nine-tails.

She reacted loudly to a little of my voice, and when I tried to make eye contact a little while ago she kept averting her gaze.

What. Ah, when I fainted...Did I do something bad? I was on her huge tail a moment ago. But even thinking about I don't think that's the reason.

“Hey, Nine-tails.” (Shuten)

“What?” (Nine-tails)

“Look me in the eye.” (Shuten)

“.....Well, there is no reason to look anywhere else.” (Nine-tails) “What are you hiding?” (Shuten)

Falter, falter, her gaze faltered.

That kind of response is too obvious.

Well, I’m just looking for identity of the mysterious thing I felt earlier.

.....

.....

...Something like, that’s it. A magical power. But what is wrong with this magical power?

...Hm, what is this.

.....Hm? Hmmm?

“It’s not my magic, but mixed with someone else!!” (Shuten) *Biku~!* (Nine-tails) (*sfx for a flinch, or frightened surprise*) “Hey, what do you mean by flinching! I thought I had felt this magic somewhere before, but this is the magical power I felt from the fox-fire!”

I don’t understand, there are other strange sensations from outside my body, and apparently there is a path connecting to something else. I wonder where it is connected to, no...

“Oi, is it yours?”

“No.” (Nine-tails)

“No, that doesn’t explain anything you useless tails.” (Shuten) “Useless tails?!” (Nine-tails)

I turned around vigorously at the outburst and drew near to her face.

I thought I had some pretty strong intimidation, as she blushed and averted her eyes.

Hey, what did you do?!

“...K, Kindred” (Nine-tails)

“Huh?” (Shuten)

The Nine-tails murmured as she looked away.

Kindred?

“So that’s why I signed a contract with you! Because your magical power seemed exhausted like you were going to die, so I decided to supply magic from myself!” (Nine-tails) “Ah, what? You were trying to help? You should have said so from the beginning...Hm? I think?” (Shuten) I am now satisfied with what the path is that connects to the outside of my body. But then, once my magical power returns, you should just cut the line.

Looking at her with such a thought, something made my face turn red. This isn’t the big brother I know. I feel shameful.

“So...you...are too strong.” (Nine-tails)

“Huh?” (Shuten)

“Gya, instead I was turned into kindred!! I was!!” (Nine-tails)That’s.

Pfft.

“Hahahahaha I can only laugh at this stupid demon!!” (Shuten) “Who’s stupid. You may call me Master.” (Nine-tails) “Who would call you that stupid fool!!” (Shuten) “Ho—, I made a kindred pact to save you yet you show this attitude towards me?” (Nine-tails) “You become bossy so quickly!? Y, you want a really quiet man!!” (Shuten) I’m sorry, it’s just really funny.

In other words, she created the contract with good intentions to help me, but due to my strength from acquiring two pearl pieces I could not “obey” and it was reversed.

Hahahaha.

No, it’s super funny.

“Laughing from your stomach!? Rolling and laughing!?” (Nine-tails)

“Hahahahaha!” (Shuten)

“How~An~noy~ing! B, because I have lived longer than you!! Pay your respect! Pay your respect!” (Nine-tails) “Well, it is a bit disappointing for someone your age to become my kindred.” (Shuten) “How stupidly energetic! It’s true I wanted to cut it off before you woke up! Really please cut off the contract quickly!” (Nine-tails) “HaHaHaHaHa. No way.” (Shuten)

“Whaaaaaaaaaaaaat!?” (Nine-tails)

No way. Why should I cut off the contract?

Is it so surprising that you would jump like that?

“You are going to the Empire soon?” (Shuten)

“That’s right, but!? But, so what!?” (Nine-tails) “Because I am also going to the Empire. You know, they say good company makes the road shorter, and I have been lonely while traveling.” (Shuten) “I don’t know your circumstances!! Why are you going to follow me!?!?” (Nine-tails) “No well, the fact that it is also because of your mistake, after all, it is a matter of being kindred. When you die, I die, right? Aren’t you worried?” (Shuten) “First that now this, you are terrible trulyyyyyy!!” (Nine-tails) The Nine-tails cried out *Mukya* in complaint.

It seems like it will be fun and more than that, it doesn’t seem like she dislikes...Hm? It seems she hates me in earnest?

“Hey Nine-tails, Hey Nine-tails.” (Shuten)

“What!?” (Nine-tails)

“Do you really hate being with me so much?” (Shuten) “Well...well, I mean such a thing doesn’t really matter!?” (Nine-tails) “Oh, yes, then it’s okay.” (Shuten)

“What!?” (Nine-tails)

“I will cut off the contract if you stop yelling.” (Shuten) “Aaaaaaaaaaaaaahhh!! Mo~! Annoying guy! This guy really makes me angry!!” (Nine-tails) ‘Cause you know.

To have such a fun traveling companion is satisfying, I think it is very nice.

Oh, that’s right.

There is one thing that I haven't heard from her until now.

"Hey you, what's your name. Mine is Shuten." (Shuten) "You changed the topic at an unbelievable speed!?" (Nine-tails) "...So?" (Shuten)

"...Hiragi. It's Hiragi." (Hiragi) (TL: *a name and a new companion, yay!*)

"It sounds like the name of my natural enemy." (Shuten) "I was born earlier than you!?" (Hiragi)

Mukya-! The anger of the Nine-tails – now known as Hiragi – is revealed.

I wonder what kind of feelings she has towards the Empire, and I wonder what lies ahead of us now. Because we are going to where the magic librarians swarm, if we're not careful we could easily perish. Still, the collecting of pearl pieces...12 more.

Rather than traveling alone, somehow I think this will be more fun.

"Hey little Shuten, how many people will smile at the sky alone?" (Hiragi) "No, the sunset is beautiful." (Shuten)

"So you were that kind of crazy person?" (Hiragi) "Why are looking at me with such judging eyes!?" (Shuten) Since I barely managed to move my body, today I will stay here, and tomorrow we will go to the Empire.

Well anyway.

"I'll be counting on you, Hiragi." (Shuten)

"It's something pretty suspicious though...forget it." (Hiragi) The female Nine-tails, Hiragi, has become a comrade! ▼

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